'Possessed' soldier dummy has hands chopped-off after it 'attacked cadets'

20:44, 27 Jun 2016 Updated 20:46, 27 Jun 2016 By Rachel Bishop

mirror.co.uk



'Possessed' solider dummy gets its hands chopped off by army cadet

A group of cadets say they have been forced to chop-off a "possessed" soldier dummy's hands after it kept waking up in the night and attacking them with a gun.

The military school students claim the dummy is possessed by an evil spirit and it was often spotted moving about on its own.

Some cadets have even claimed the mannequin at the unnamed institution in the Bolivian capital of La Paz has been taken over by the ghost of one of their former commanders.

The decision to remove its hands came after a terrified student reportedly shot at the dummy.



CEN

Army cadets have chopped off the hands of a soldier dummy they claim is possessed by the evil spirit of their former commander

So to stop it causing anymore trouble, they decided to chop off its hands and put it in a glass casing.

Moises Borja, one of the cadets, explained the bizarre tactic to Panamericana Television: "We had to make the decision to cut off its hands so it wouldn't attack us anymore and we then put it in a glass case so it wouldn't be able to move either."

Some of the students told reporters that the dummy was able to use weapons and they feared it could attack them.

Students claim the mannequin would attack them with a gun in the middle of the night

Student Moises Borja added: "Some cadets in the north wing claim they can hear sounds of people walking [down the corridors]."



CEN

Edilberto Parra, another cadet, said it was all because the school has been overrun by evil spirits.

He said: "If you walk alone down a corridor, next to all the photos of the presidents and war hero statues, they start to ask you "Why are you here?" and "Why are you walking like that?"

The claims have not been investigated and the director of the institution, not named in local reports, has said it was all just superstition.

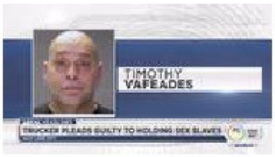
Comments
6 hours ago
tambon
Which illiterate clown couldn't spell 'soldier' on the clip?

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'Vampire trucker' admits to holding women for sexual activity | KSL.com ksl.com

By Dennis Romboy | Posted Jun 30th, 2016 @ 5:30pm



5PM: 'Vampire trucker' admits to holding women for sexual activity

SALT LAKE CITY — Just days before he was to go on trial, a long-haul trucker who authorities say is obsessed with vampires admitted in federal court Thursday to holding women as sex slaves.

Timothy Jay Vafeades, 56, pleaded guilty to two counts of transportation for illegal sexually activity in an agreement with prosecutors. The government dropped two kidnapping charges as part of the deal. Vafeades previously admitted to transportation of child pornography.

Prosecutors and Vafeades' public defenders also agreed to a 20-year prison term, which U.S. District Judge David Nuffer said he intends to impose. A sentencing hearing is scheduled for Nov. 2. Vafeades is being held in the Davis County Jail.

Assistant U.S. attorney Trina Higgins said prosecutors are happy to have a just resolution. She said the case is complicated and reaches all across the country, and she hopes the guilty plea brings some closure to the victims.

The agreement spares the victims from having to testify at a trial.

"That's not something I can comment on, but if they wish to speak at sentencing, they'll be allowed to, and I hope that we'll hear some of their voices," Higgins said.

Vafeades' attorneys declined to comment as they left the courthouse.

Dubbed the "vampire trucker," Vafeades held women captive in his truck, the "Twilight Express," sexually and physically abused them and sharpened their teeth with a power tool, according to the charges.



Judge says Utah trucker's arrest was legal in sex slave case

A federal judge has dismissed a challenge to the arrest of a Utah truck driver accused of keeping women as sex slaves in his semi-trailer as he drove across the country.

The Murray man wore bracelets on his wrists that he called "slave bracelets" and would hit his victims with the bracelets if they didn't follow his commands, court documents say. He owned a pair of dentures that were carved to make the two front teeth appear as fangs, prosecutors said.

His alleged trail of abuse ended in November 2013 in Clay County, Minnesota, when a state trooper realized that the female passenger in Vafeades' semitrailer had a lifetime protection order issued against him in Florida.

Vafeades' guilty plea involved two victims in 2012 and 2013. But court documents say there were at least six victims and the abuse goes back as far as 1994. Vafeades was married to four of the

victims and one was a relative, according to court documents.

One woman told investigators that Vafeades took all of her identification, cut and dyed her hair, sexually assaulted her, forced her to shower with him, refused to let her look at other people, filed her teeth and hit her with a belt. She escaped after six months while the truck stopped in California in 2008, court documents say.

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'Vampire trucker' accused of keeping sex slaves pleads guilty

BY Christopher Brennan

nydailynews.com

DAILY NEWS

'Vampire trucker' accused of keeping sex slaves pleads guilty
BY Christopher Brennan

NEW YORK DAILY NEWS
Updated: Friday, July 1, 2016, 9:15 AM



(Tim Vafeades via Twitter)

'Vampire trucker' Timothy Vafeades, 56, has pleaded guilty after being accused of keeping two women as sex slaves.

A Utah man dubbed the "Vampire Trucker" faces 20 years in prison after pleading guilty to luring women into his semi and keeping them as sex slaves as he drove around the country.

Timothy Vafeades had been accused of kidnapping 18- and 19-year-old women, then keeping them prisoner in his truck for months at different points.

The now 56-year-old, who wore a set of fake vampire fangs and drove the "Twilight Express," was said to have beat and sexually assaulted the older victim, a relative, for six months in 2013.

His teeth obsession also extended to his victim, who he also made wear false dentures after he ground down her own teeth and cut them with an exacto knife, according to a 2014 criminal complaint.

Billionaire perv Jeffrey Epstein must testify in victim's lawsuit



(Good4Utah.com)

Vafeades met one of his victims at Sapp Brothers Truck Stop in Salt Lake City and then kept her prisoner for months.

After he was arrested, the 18-year-old came forward and said that she had been beaten and kept captive for three months in 2012, when she was forced to have sex with the trucker and had one of her teeth filed down.

The Salt Lake City man, who prosecutors say previously had four other similar victims stretching back to 1994, was busted in late 2013 after officers at a weigh station in Minnesota noticed bruises on the 18-year-old.

He faced charges of child pornography in addition to the sex slave accusations, and pleaded guilty to transporting perverted material in April.



(Davis County Jail)

Vafeades was busted in 2013 when officers in Minnesota noticed bruises on one of his victims.

Prosecutors dropped two kidnapping charges when Vafeades pleaded guilty to charges of transporting the teens for illegal sex days before his trial was set to begin.

Amal Clooney will represent Yazidi genocide victims

Attorney Trina Higgins told KSL that she hopes the plea helps bring the victims closure, and said that they will have an opportunity to speak at sentencing if they wish.

Vafeades is set to be sentenced in November.

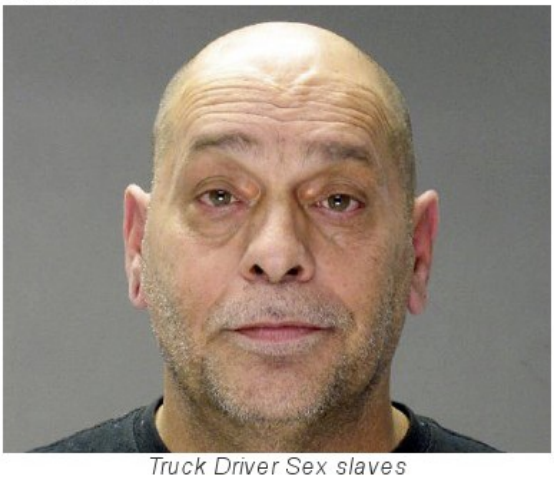
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'Vampire' truck driver accused of kidnapping women enters plea, avoids trial

By The Washington Post Follow on Twitter on July 02, 2016 at 10:00 AM, updated July 02, 2016 at 10:11 AM

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Truck Driver Sex slaves

This undated image provided by the Clay County, Minn., Jail shows Timothy Jay Vafeades. Federal charges have been filed against Vafeades, a Utah trucker accused of keeping sex slaves in his semitrailer for months at a time. (The Associated Press) *( )*

The woman told investigators she met Timothy Jay Vafeades at the Sapp Brothers truck stop in Salt Lake City. It was April 2012, and she got into his tractor-trailer after agreeing to get dinner with him, according to court documents.

But about 10 minutes into the drive, Vafeades told her that "they were not going to dinner and that she was going on the road with him for a week or more," an FBI agent wrote in a criminal affidavit. "She reported that she knew she could not do anything."

For months after that, investigators allege, Vafeades forced the woman to live with him, work on the truck -- and have sex with him almost daily.

Vafeades told the woman "she was his 'slave' on the truck," and he beat her often, according to the affidavit.

Vafeades was eventually charged with kidnapping the woman and one other and transporting them for illegal sexual activity aboard his truck, dubbed the "Twilight Express." Prosecutors alleged that he also kidnapped and sexually assaulted four other women over a span of two decades, subjecting them to beatings and holding them captive as he drove his truck across the country.

On Thursday (June 30), Vafeades, 56, agreed to a plea deal just days before his trial was to begin.

He pleaded guilty to the illegal sexual activity charges. The kidnapping charges were dropped in exchange.

The deal means Vafeades -- referred to by local media as the "vampire" truck driver because of the fangs on false teeth he once wore -- could face more than 20 years in prison.

In May, Vafeades, 56, also pleaded guilty to transportation of child pornography, which

carries a five-year sentence.

(c) 2016, The Washington Post · Elahe Izadi wrote this article for The Washington Post.

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Deputy fires "1 in a billion" shot into suspect's gun barrel

July 14, 2016

yahoo.com



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This photo made available on July 14, 2016 by the Aurora Police Department, shows a close-up of an off-duty sheriff's deputy's bullet lodged inside the barrel of an assailant's gun, which investigators say was pointed at the deputy before the deputy fired at him, in Aurora, Colo. Investigators say Arapahoe County Deputy Jose Marquez fired a bullet straight down the barrel of the suspect's gun, a shot they called "one in a billion." The detail emerged in a letter from prosecutors announcing that Marquez was justified in shooting the attempted-robbery suspect, who survived. Marquez also was wounded in the January shooting and is still recovering. (Aurora Police Department via AP)

AURORA, Colo. (AP) — Investigators say an off-duty Colorado sheriff's deputy fired a bullet straight down the barrel of a suspect's gun, a shot they called "one in a billion."

The detail emerged in a letter from prosecutors Wednesday announcing that Arapahoe County Deputy Jose Marquez was justified in shooting the attempted-robbery suspect, who survived. Marquez also was wounded in the January shooting and is still recovering.

The Aurora Sentinel newspaper in suburban Denver (http://bit.ly/29IRW4a) reports that Marquez was visiting his girlfriend's apartment when two suspects approached him in the parking lot with their guns drawn.

The off-duty deputy told investigators that one suspect told him to "give it up."

Marquez says the suspects fired first and he shot back. One was wounded in the leg and arrested, and the other got away.

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Information from: The Aurora Sentinel, http://www.aurorasentinel.com/

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10 things you might not know about Simon de Montfort

Wednesday 29th June 2016

historyextra.com

BBC History Magazine logo

History Revealed magazine logo

Here, Darren Baker, author of *With All For All: The Life of Simon de Montfort*, brings you 10 facts about Simon de Montfort...

1) Not that Simon de Montfort

History remembers two of them with that name, father and son. Simon de Montfort senior originally came from a minor lordship close to Paris, but when his uncle Robert de Beaumont, the earl of Leicester, died in 1204 without any children, he went to England to claim the earldom. King John rebuffed him, but in 1210 some disaffected nobles elected him king. They had had enough of the devious John, and Simon by this time was the most famous warrior in Europe. He was the inspired leader of the Christian forces in the Albigensian Crusade and scored major victories against the odds.

Contrary to popular belief, Simon de Montfort senior did not direct the sack of Beziers, where as many as 20,000 people are said to have perished, nor did he utter the likely fictitious command to "kill them all, God will know his own". But he was loathed as an invader from the north who burned heretics and acquired their property in equal measure. His death in 1218 during the siege of Toulouse was both mourned and cheered. He was succeeded by his eldest son Amaury, whose status as a French peer barred him from claiming the earldom of Leicester. It was a different story for his younger son Simon, however...

2) Simon seduced the king's sister

Still in his early twenties, the younger Simon de Montfort (6th earl of Leicester) came to England in 1230 and persuaded John's son Henry III to give him the earldom. Henry was interested in reclaiming Normandy and other French provinces taken from his father by King Philip Augustus of France and saw Simon as a future supporter to this end against his increasingly isolationist barons.

Eight years later the king found himself facing a rebellion at home when it was discovered that he had secretly married his sister Eleanor, the widow of William Marshal II, to Montfort, who by then was seen as a foreigner interloper with too much influence at court. Matters were made worse by the fact that Eleanor had taken a vow of chastity after the death of her first husband.

Henry bought off the rebels, but the next year he turned against Simon for pledging him as security for a loan. Montfort had to borrow heavily to acquire the earldom and his wife and figured his brother-in-law the king was good for the money. In front of the court, Henry let loose a tirade that accused him, among other things, of seducing his sister, thereby forcing his hand in the marriage.

The Montforts' first child was born less than a year after the wedding, but a decade later Simon was suffering pangs of conscience that suggest he had indeed seduced Eleanor before they were married.

Henry III wearing a red gown and a crown. (Photo by Hulton Archive/Getty Images)



3) Simon was English, French, European

Simon de Montfort, the 6th earl of Leicester, could not speak English when he first came ashore [he would have used French with the people he hung out with at court], but he quickly integrated and within a few years was being described as an Englishman. The court abounded with foreigners at that time. Henry III was by nature cosmopolitan and pursued a continental policy to maintain English influence across the Channel. Simon was of the same mind and cultivated his family and contacts in France to firmly anchor England within Europe.

The nobility, however, saw it all as a waste of time and money and grew resentful of these 'favourites'. After Henry defeated the reformers in 1261, the barons and clerics aroused the English-speaking population against the king and foreigners. They chose as their leader Simon de Montfort because he was the only one with the talent and prestige to pull it off.

So it was a distinctly English revolution: a foreigner toppling the king on a platform of getting rid of all foreigners. Of course, Simon by then had been the earl of Leicester for 25 years and had an English wife and children. But politics being what it is, he was eventually toppled himself in part because some of the men who brought him to power began to resent a foreigner telling them what to do.

4) Simon was not an anti-Semite

Not any more than other Christians of that era. Apart from remembering that it was a time of crusades and religious fervour, medieval people lived by a completely different value system to our own. Judging them in terms of modern political correctness is therefore presumptuous and misconceived.

In Montfort's case, he expelled the Jews that were living in Leicester following his arrival in 1232. Actually it was only half of Leicester. The other half belonged to his great-aunt Margaret, the sister of Robert de Beaumont, and the half-dozen Jewish families who were expelled moved across the border to her side. Religion aside, Montfort's action reflected a crackdown on the Jews then going on in France over the debts owed to them by Christians. The inhabitants of Leicester expected their new lord to offer them a political gesture and this expulsion is what he gave them.

The Jews would return over time to his half of Leicester and even Montfort got into the business of borrowing money from them, but there's no denying Jews suffered greatly during the revolution Montfort led against the king 30 years later. They were beaten, robbed, and in one horrific night in 1264 some 500 were massacred in London by supporters of Montfort's rebel army. The religious fanaticism behind it was mostly a sham. It was plunder and a sadistic free for all they were after.

The Montfortian leaders of the city offered shelter to the survivors and Simon forced the perpetrators to turn over their loot, but then condemned himself in the eyes of posterity by using it for his cause.

5) Simon was nominated to be the governor of Jerusalem

After falling out with Henry in 1239, Simon went on crusade in the Holy Land in 1240. Crusading was a family business and his brother Amaury preceded him there the year before, only to be captured in an ill-advised raid by the Egyptians. Since there was a truce at the time between the Christian and Muslim forces, there was little for Simon to do except get mixed up in the politics of the region.

His cousin Philip de Montfort was one of the leaders of a faction opposed to imperial rule over Jerusalem. Simon was the emperor's brother-in-law inasmuch as his wife Eleanor's sister Isabella was married to Frederick II and got to know him well during his travels. Philip figured his cousin, whose possessed ambition and charisma, was the best compromise candidate to unite both factions at a time when the Egyptians were bent on re-conquering Jerusalem. Together they asked the emperor to make Simon their governor, but nothing came of it [historians are unsure as to why] and Simon left the Holy Land.

It was his good fortune, for three years later the Egyptians directed an Asiatic people fleeing from the Mongols

to sack Jerusalem and they did so with great carnage. Philip was one of the few lucky ones to escape and remained a lord of the crusader states until assassinated by an agent of the sultan while at worship in 1270.



Simon de Montfort. From 'A Short History of the English People' by J R Green, published in 1874. (Photo by Universal History Archive/UIG via Getty Images)

6) Simon was not the founder of parliament per se

As England grew in population and wealth, the royal inner council evolved from an intimate round table to a major assembly. By 1236 this assembly, which met only at the king's invitation, was called parliament, meaning a discussion or debate. Revolution broke out in 1258 after one group of barons had enough of the king's brothers and forced him to exile them. Since they had long wanted to reform his government, they took a step further and enacted the Provisions of Oxford, which gave the barons unprecedented power.

One of these provisions called for parliament to meet three times a year at fixed intervals, thereby taking it out of the king's hands and making it an independent institution of state. When Henry sought to regain power in 1261 by having the pope annul his oath to the Provisions, his point of attack was to reassert control over parliament, and Simon moved to stop him. Although motivated as much by personal and political reasons as idealism, Simon shrewdly saw parliament as the main check on the king. When he took over the government after his success in the civil war of 1264–65, it was to parliament that he addressed his plan of government, which was in effect England's first constitution. He later enlarged the scope of representation outside the landed elite, namely by including the wealthy merchant class of the cities, and in doing so acted like a prime minister – the first one, we can say, in English history.

7) Simon was a great warrior like his father

In 1248, Henry chose Simon to quell his mutinous province of Gascony because he had the reputation for being an outstanding soldier. This seems to have been based on his father's reputation, however, because Simon himself had no record of major engagements before coming to England. When he went to war against Henry in 1264, he was as much a novice as the rest of his forces.

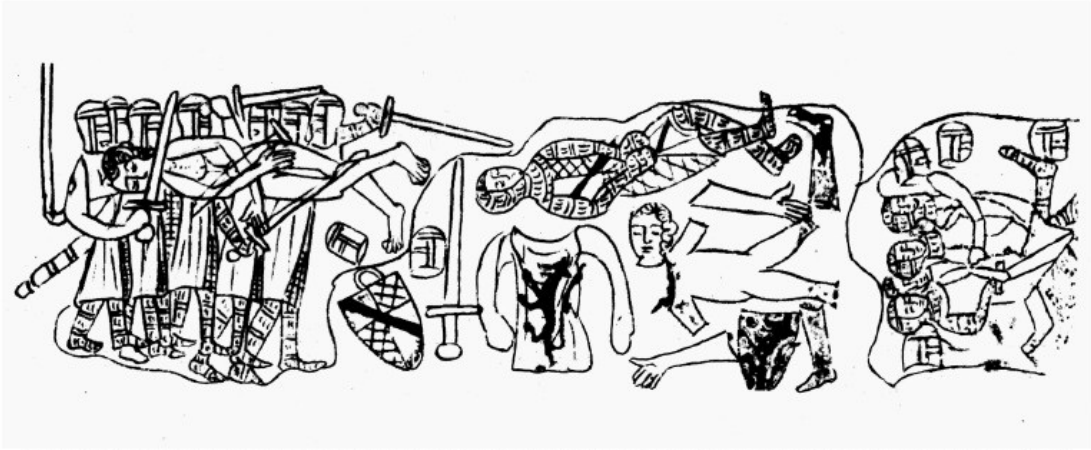
Henry mastered the initial phases of the campaign and had Simon cornered in London. He was ready to finish him off when Montfort made one of those bold strokes he would forever be remembered for: he marched on the king at Lewes with a numerically smaller army and won the battle. It came about when Henry's son, the future King Edward I, left the battlefield to go on a killing spree. Simon exploited this and ended up taking both the king and prince captive. The next year Edward escaped his captors, raised an army, and was determined not to repeat his stupidity at Lewes.

8) Simon was hacked to pieces on the battlefield

This is usually what most people know about Montfort, aside from his role in the birth of English parliament. Deserted by the conceited and xenophobic earl of Gloucester, Simon found himself trapped at Evesham in August 1265. Before the battle, Edward put together a death squad to find Montfort (his uncle), and kill him. Whether it was at their hand or not, Montfort was slain, stripped of armour and chopped up. The men who killed him were motivated by a fiendish bloodlust worked up on the battlefield.

It used to be that the nobility were spared and captured for ransom, but not anymore. Edward ordered his men to kill as many of the Montfortians as possible, the result being he forever changed the nature of warfare and politics in England. Unlike his father, who did not execute a single political opponent in his 56 years on the throne, Edward had men such as William Wallace and David of Wales dispatched in grisly fashion. He wanted

everyone to know that what happened to Simon de Montfort could be their fate as well.



Battle of Evesham, 4 August 1265, won by an army loyal to King Henry III. Simon de Montfort is killed and his body mutilated. English manuscript illumination. (Granger, NYC/Alamy Stock Photo)

9) Simon's sons scandalised Europe

After Henry resumed power in 1265, the five surviving Montfort children and their mother, Eleanor, left for exile on the continent. Two of them, Simon and Guy, found service in Italy and Sicily. Guy proved himself to be as sagacious a warrior as his father and quickly rose to become the military governor of Tuscany. In 1271 Guy and Simon arrived in Viterbo, where a papal election was in process. There they learned that their cousin Henry of Almain was in the city as well. He was at worship in a church when Guy burst in and slaughtered him at the altar. The hapless Henry was then dragged outside to be hacked up by Guy and his men in gruesome retribution for the treatment of his father's body.

Henry was chosen as a target because of his close personal connection to Edward, his desertion of Simon during the civil war, and his marriage into the family of the Montforts' mortal enemy in France. The brothers were disowned, with the younger Simon dying later that year, but Guy got off with no more than house arrest. As brutal and shocking as the murder was, there was a feeling somebody had it coming because of the disgraceful treatment of Simon's body at Evesham.

10) Simon was the grandfather of the last Welsh Princess of Wales

Simon's greatest enemies during his rule were the so-called marcher barons of the Welsh borderlands. To keep them in line, he made an alliance with Prince Llywelyn of Wales in 1264. The agreement called for Simon's daughter Eleanor to marry Llywelyn, but Henry's restoration put that on hold. After Simon's widow died in 1275, the younger Eleanor left for Wales to go through with the marriage. Accompanied by her brother Amaury, they were captured at sea on orders from Edward, now the king.

He imprisoned Amaury, convinced he had something to do with the murder of Henry of Almain, but kept Eleanor in comfortable confinement at Windsor. Only after Llywelyn submitted in 1278 did he allow the marriage go forward.

In 1282 Eleanor died giving birth to a daughter named Gwenllian. Llywelyn was up in arms against Edward later that year and killed in a prelude to the conquest of Wales. Fearing the infant's combined Welsh and English royal heritage (she was King John's great-granddaughter), Edward had her placed in a nunnery in Lincolnshire, where she died in 1337, perhaps unaware of her famous and fiery ancestry.

Darren Baker is the author of *With All For All: The Life of Simon de Montfort*, (Amberley Publishing), a biography following Montfort's life from his birth and upbringing in France until his defeat and death at the hands of the future Edward I. The book is currently available in hardback and will be released in paperback in February 2017.

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Foul Odor Uncovers 11-Foot Gator Rotting In Neighborhood Storm Drain

huffingtonpost.com

"This was an abnormally large gator, but removal is part of what we do."

06/15/2016 11:04 am ET

- Nina Golgowski Trends reporter, The Huffington Post



Lee County Department of Transportation
An 11-foot-long gator is seen being removed from a southwest Florida neighborhood on Monday.

Authorities say an "abnormally large gator" was pulled from a southwest Florida neighborhood's storm drain Monday following calls to the sheriff's department about a foul smell.

In a statement, Lee County officials say they determined that the odor was consistent with a decaying alligator. What they found beneath the ground, however, was described as highly unusual.

Inside the 4-foot-wide catch basin, Department of Transportation officials reported hooking an 11-foot-long gator, one they were photographed hauling out of the Whiskey Creek neighborhood with an excavator.

Lee County's DOT says they typically handle one to two dead alligators in storm drains a year but rarely ones of this size.

"DOT generally is alerted to such situations by reports of odor coming from a catch basin or when drainage is backed up for no obvious reason," the county said in an emailed press release.

Lee County DOT Director Randy Cerchie called it business as usual.

"This was an abnormally large gator, but removal is part of what we do," he said in a statement.

County spokeswoman Betsy Clayton told the News-Press that the gator likely entered the storm drain through the pipes.

The big question: How did it get in? The county describes the pipes leading to the drain as only about 14-inches by 24-inches.

"We don't usually see gators that big because our pipes are not that big," Cerchie said.

According to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, female American alligators rarely grow larger than 10-feet in length. Males can grow much larger, however.

The largest gator ever found in the state was 14-feet, 3 1/2-inches in length, the FWC reported.

The Lee County gator's body was hauled away in a dump truck to a DOT site that's designated for dead animals, and there it was buried, the county said.

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Beloved '110-year-old lobster' dies on way to aquarium and retirement

00:58 EST, 28 July 2016 | dailymail.co.uk

Daily Mail .com
MailOnline US - news, sport, celebrity, science and health stories

Beloved lobster that was spared the dinner plate at '110 years old' dies on the way to an aquarium where it would have enjoyed retirement

- **Beloved crustacean named Larry was being taken from Florida to Maine**
- **It had been rescued from doom in a restaurant by activists**
- **But staff at the West Boothbay Harbor found it had died during the journey**
- **Larry weighted 15 pounds - three times the size of an average lobster**
- **A diner had ordered the lobster for his dinner in Sunshine, Florida**
- **However animal activists then stepped in and offer to buy the sea creature**

By Dailymail.com Reporter

A lobster that was saved from the plate has died on its way to an aquarium - where it would have enjoyed retirement.

The beloved crustacean named Larry, which is said to be between 70 and 110 years old, was being transported from a restaurant in Sunshine, Florida, to Maine when it passed away.

The creature had been rescued from its doom by activists, but when staff at the West Boothbay Harbor unpacked the lobster and found it had died during the 1,530-mile journey.

It's not clear what killed the lobster. It was packed in a Styrofoam clamshell with seaweed and frozen gel packs.



Larry, the lobster that was saved from the plate has died on its way to an aquarium - where it would have enjoyed retirement



The beloved crustacean which is said to be between 70 and 110 years old, was being transported from a restaurant in Sunshine, Florida, to Maine when it passed away

Larry, who weighed 15 pounds, three times larger than the average lobster, was headed for the stock pot earlier this month.

A man who saw him in the tank at Fish Tin seafood restaurant in Sunrise, Florida, bought him from owner Joe Melluso and reserved a table for his family the following week.

Melluso originally bought Larry from a vendor on Monday and was 'astounded' by his size.

He said he felt 'bad' about serving up the lobster, but would rather that he do it than someone else, according to Local 10.

But some animal activists got word of the lobster's impending fate and intervened.

They offered to buy Larry from the man who wanted to make the aging animal dinner.

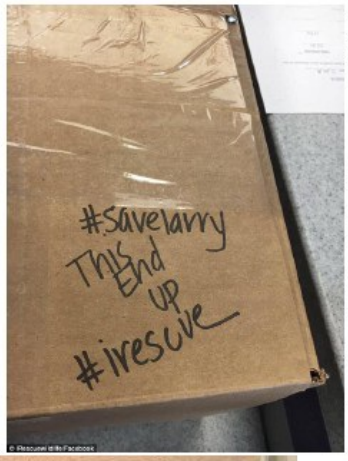
'They really opened up my eyes and it got me a little emotional,' Melluso said. 'We went ahead and donated the lobster to them.'

If Larry had reached freedom up north, the lobster would have been quarantined.

It would likely have lived out its natural life at the aquarium - but there were chances Larry could have been freed back into the ocean.



It's not clear what killed the lobster. It was packed in a Styrofoam clamshell with seaweed and gel packs



The packaging he was being carried in had 'Save Larry' written on. The animal activists that rescued the creature hailed from Costa Rice

A man who Larry in the tank at Fish Tin seafood restaurant in Sunrise, Florida, bought from owner Joe Melluso (pictured) and reserved a table for his family the following week. But animal activists then stepped in and saved the lobster

- 110-year-old lobster nearing end of days at Sunrise seafood...



Comments (

HMOORE123, Sarasota, United States, about 7 hours ago

No one enjoys captivity. I wish they had released him when they had the chance. No good was going to come from shipping him to an aquarium. And we have plenty to eat without devouring the animal kingdom.

ChrisMD, Hudson, United States, about 9 hours ago

Stupid. Now no one gets to enjoy it.

Miamiredbird, Miami, United States, about 10 hours ago

Wasn't Joe from Impractical Jokers looking for LARRY ? Here he is Joe...

AmericanPilgrim, United States of Mars, United States, about 11 hours ago

He froze to death.

nycerieman, Erie, United States, about 12 hours ago

So how did he taste, I for one admit wanting to know.

mindwatcher, manchester, about 12 hours ago

Now can we eat him?

Keyser_Söze, Northwest Florida, United States, about 12 hours ago

As per his request he will be boiled and bathed in garlic butter

Keyser_Söze, Northwest Florida, United States, about 12 hours ago

The funeral will be tomorrow his final wishes were to be boiled and served with a garlic butter sauce.

jimpeel, Denver CO USA, United States, about 12 hours ago

"It's not clear what killed the lobster." The one word answer is ACTIVISTS.

jimpeel, Denver CO USA, United States, about 12 hours ago

Alas, Curly, Larry is no Moe.

Published by Associated Newspapers Ltd

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Navy sink retired military ship during missile-testing exercise

15:20 EST, 19 July 2016 | dailymail.co.uk

Daily Mail .com
MailOnline US - news, sport, celebrity, science and health stories

The ship that would not die: Stubborn old warship takes 12 hours to sink after US Navy throws everything it has at it in weapons testing exercise

- **USS Thach was sunk during the major naval exercise RIMPAC 2016**
- **The exercise, known as SINKEX, occurs every two years**
- **Decomissioned ships are stripped of their weapons and fuel and used for target practice by the US, Canada, Australia, and the Republic of Korea**
- **First launched in 1982, Thach was retired in 2013**
- **Thach was hit with over 5,000 pounds of high explosives July 14**
- **It took 12 hours to finally sink, 55 miles north of Kaui**

By Joel Christie For Dailymail.com

It was a retired war ship hit with over 5,000 pounds of high explosives.

However the USS Thach, which was bombarded from the air, sea, and even underwater last Thursday during a missile-testing exercise, did not go down without a fight, taking 12 hours to finally sink to the bottom of the Pacific Ocean.

The Rim of the Pacific Exercise, also known as SINKEX or the sinking exercise, takes place every two years, and involves stripping an old frigate of its weapons, ammunitions and fuel.

It is then used for Navy target practice, with ships, submarines and aircraft from the US, Canada, Australia, and the Republic of Korea all taking aim.



Boom: Video taken of the exercise shows the moment ship was first hit with a harpoon missile from a South Korean submarine

Resilent: The USS Thach, which launched in 1982 and was retired in 2013, turned out to be quite hardy

After being blasted with over five thousand pounds of high explosives, the ship took 12 hours to finally sink

But the latest, the USS Thach, which was retired in 2013, turned out to be quite hardy.

The ship was towed to an area 55 miles north off the coast of Kaui and then bombarded.

According to Popular Mechanics, the ship was first hit with a harpoon missile from a South Korean





submarine.

Next, the Australian frigate HMAS Ballarat launched another Harpoon, and an Australian SH-60S helicopter shot it with a Hellfire missile.

The US maritime patrol aircraft then hit it with Harpoon and Maverick missiles.

However that was merely the beginning.

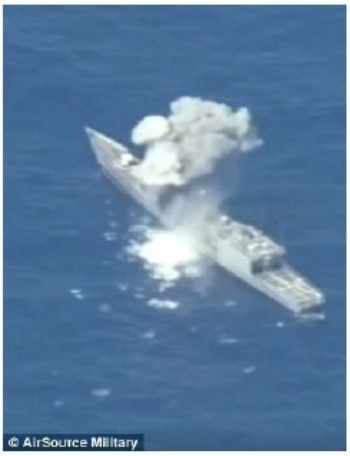
The cruiser USS Princeton then hit it with yet another Harpoon missile, while an American SH-60S Navy chopper hit it with more Hellfires.

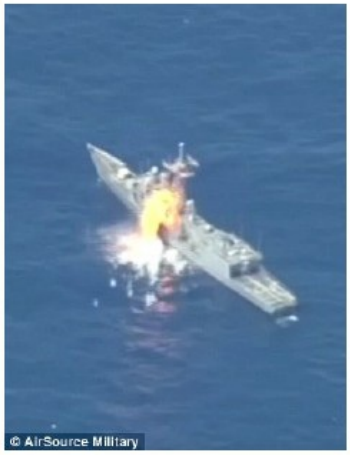
US Navy F/A-18 Hornets also dropped a 2,000 pound Mk. 84 bomb and a US Air Force B-52 bomber dropped a GBU-12 Paveway laser guided 500 pound bomb.

A US Navy submarine got into the action, striking it with a Mk. 48 torpedo.



The ship was used for target practice, with ships, submarines and aircraft from the US, Canada, Australia, and the Republic of Korea all taking aim







The SINKEX, or sinking exercise, takes place every two years, and involves stripping an old frigate of its weapons, ammunitions and fuel, and then sinking it during target

practice

Video taken by a helicopter shows the varying hits the ship put up with, as well as the damage afterwards.

WHAT IS A SINKEX?

A SINKEX, or sink exercise, is a multinational maritime exercise that takes place in and around the Hawaiian Islands and off the coast of southern California every two years.

This year's RIMPAC exercise, the 25th in the series that began in 1971, started with the sinking of the USS Thach on July 14, featuring hips, submarines and aircraft from the U.S., Canada, Australia, and the Republic of Korea.

The exercise will continue this week.

The USS Thach finally sank at 7:25 p.m. on July 14 in waters 15,000 feet deep.

As per SINKEX procedures, each ship must go down in at least 6,000 feet of water and at least 50 nautical miles from land.

'This SINKEX was a tremendous event for all the units who participated. As you can imagine, the opportunity to fire live ordnances at a real target is incredibly rare and I know that these men and women learned so much today,' Royal Canadian Navy Rear Adm. Scott Bishop, deputy commander of the RIMPAC Combined Task Force, said.

'This kind of training is vital to strengthening our interoperability and increasing our readiness for operations in the future.'



Damage: This shot from the scene video shows the damage done to the ship during the bombardments

Explosive: The ship withstood a huge amount of damage, as seen here at the helicopter pad at the back

The decommissioned USS Thach was the 34th ship of the Oliver Hazard Perry-class guided missile frigates.

The ship was named for Naval aviator Adm. John S. Thatch, the developer of the 'Thach Weave', a dogfighting tactic in World War II and former Commander, U.S.

The shop was built by the Todd Pacific Shipyards in San Pedro, California and launched in December 1982.

In late 2006 while deployed to the Southern Pacific, Thach caught fire as she attempted to put out a fire on a drug smuggling ship.

It was then decommissioned in San Diego on November 1, 2013





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» Way in

Recently there has been a lot of publicity about a book series called *Twilight*. Some of your older brothers or sisters, or even your parents, may have read these books. They have also been made into movies.

These books are about vampires.

- **Who can tell me what they think a vampire is?**
  (Accept responses.)
- **Are vampires real?**
  (Accept responses. No, they're not real.)
- **In these made-up stories about vampires how do you think someone becomes a scary vampire?**
  (Accept responses. A vampire bites them and drinks their blood, the person dies and then the person comes to life again but this time they are not a person, they are a vampire.)

Talking about vampires is a strange way to begin our lesson today, isn't it? There aren't any vampires in the Bible because the Bible is not a made-up book—it is a book containing facts. But there are some true stories in the Bible about people dying and then coming back to life again and we're going to look at one now.

» Bible focus



Choose seven volunteers (who can read well) to come to the front of the room and face the class. Give each student a copy of their part of the Visual aid of the Narrative. Explain that each volunteer student will have part of the Bible story to tell and that the rest of the class will need to pay attention because when you raise the 'What happens next' and 'Jesus is powerful' signs they need to say those words together.

Our volunteers are going to read for us now. We need to pay attention because we will need to sort some pictures into the correct order after we hear the Bible story today.

Invite Reader 1 to read his or her section.



Hold up the Visual aid of the 'What happens next?' sign and gesture for the class to say it together.

Invite Reader 2 to read his or her section.



Hold up the Visual aid of the 'Jesus is powerful!' sign and gesture for the class to say it together.

Invite Reader 3 to read his or her section.



Hold up the 'Jesus is powerful!' sign and gesture for the class to say it together.

Invite Reader 4 to read his or her section.



Hold up the 'What happens next?' sign and gesture for the class to say it together.

Invite Reader 5 to read his or her section.



Hold up the 'What happens next?' sign and gesture for the class to say it together.

Invite Reader 6 to read his or her section.



Hold up the 'What happens next?' sign and gesture for the class to say it together.



Display the Coloured Visual aid of Jairus and his daughter (scene) if you have it.

Invite Reader 7 to read his or her section.



Hold up the 'Jesus is powerful!' sign and gesture for the class to say it together.



Please go to page 29 in your Activity books while I hand out the scissors and glue. We need to cut out the boxes, write in the speech bubbles, and then glue them in order on page 7.

Assist students as necessary. Then ask students to leave their books open for the glue to dry, but to look to you for a few moments.

What we've been learning today reminds me of a previous lesson where we found out some things about God's chosen King who would fulfil God's promises.



Hold up the Visual aid of the Scroll from Lesson 3.

Remember that God promised to send someone who would give sight to the blind, that is, he would heal people? He would also free everyone who suffers. Sounds like Jesus to me!

12. To encourage the students to understand that the unique circumstances of Jesus' birth show that he is God's Son.

13. To encourage the students to understand that Jesus demonstrated by his actions and attitudes his uniqueness as God's Son.

14. To encourage the students to consider their response to Jesus, God's Son.

15. To encourage the students to understand that Jesus died as punishment for our sins so that we can be God's friends.

16. To encourage the students to consider the evidence for, and the significance of, Jesus' resurrection.

17. To encourage the students to begin to understand the difference it makes to be a follower of Jesus.

18. To encourage students to reflect on their response to Jesus and the invitation to live as God's friends.

19. To help students understand that Jesus will return and what it will be like.

Semester 2

1.To explain what it means to be a Christian.

2. To help students appreciate the historical reality of the life of Jesus.

3. To help students appreciate the historical reality of the life of Jesus.

4. To help students appreciate the historical reality of the life of Jesus.

5. To encourage students to develop a clearer understanding of prayer as part of our relationship with God. To help students know how to pray.

6. To help students understand that God speaks to us through his word, the Bible, and to encourage them to read the Bible.

7. To introduce students to an overview of God's plan of salvation, as shown in the Bible and encourage them to appreciate the invitation to be part of God's plan.

8. To explore how the Holy Spirit can change people, giving them courage to say they are followers of Jesus.

9. To help students understand how God's sovereign grace was displayed in Saul's life as God chose him, forgave him and used him to spread the gospel.

10. To show through the story of Paul in Philippi that nothing can stop the spread of the gospel.

11. To encourage students to understand that the church is the community of all God's people and to begin to understand the extent of the church today.

12. To help students learn about some places around the world where the church is involved in spreading the news of forgiveness through Jesus.

13. To help students identify what causes anger and to help them understand different ways to respond. To encourage students to seek God's help in managing their feelings of anger.

14. To encourage students to understand Jesus' example and words to his followers that they are to love each other. To explore the implications for our relationships with others.

15. To help students understand that Jesus' followers are to help those in need.

16. To encourage students to pray and trust God when they are stressed and worried.

17. To help students understand that God wants us to care for his creation and that it will be restored through Jesus who is Lord of all.

18. To give students opportunity to ask their questions.

19. To encourage students to face their future with hope and trust in God.

Big Questions
Christian Education Publications
Year 6 last year of primary school

Stated Intention

To introduce students to God and his saving purposes for the world through Jesus Christ, his Son.

Lesson Aims (lessons 1 to 19)

Semester 1

1. To teach that God is generous and he promises that those who search for him will find him.

2. To help each student appreciate how intimately God knows each one of us and that he is in charge of our lives.

3. To show that the Bible teaches that the world was created by God and is maintained by him.

4. To help the students understand that God made people in his image, he loves us and wants us to live his way.

5. To help the students understand that because of an initial lack of faith, and disobedience, the world has become a difficult place in which to live.

6. To show the students that because of an initial disobedience to God, people suffer and sin is compounded.

7. To encourage the students to develop a clearer understanding of who God is and how we can draw near to him.

8. To help students appreciate that God cares about the suffering of his people and promises to care for them like a shepherd.

9. To help students understand that the Bible is God's word; that it is historically reliable and still relevant today.

10. To encourage students to read the Bible for themselves.

11. To help students to understand that God offers forgiveness to those who turn to him.

picture.

Giant Shark Photographed

LAKE ARROWHEAD (AP) — Undersea cameras of the Scripps Institute of Oceanography have photographed a colossal shark-like fish that is unfamiliar and may prefer living in the darkest depths of the Pacific.

Scripps' Dr. John D. Isaacs, speaking at a weekend conference, estimated the fish at 15-20 feet in length and three to six feet thick at its widest.

The species could not be determined, he said, because of the unmanned camera's limited field which only allowed picturing the fish's gills and pectoral fin.

"It is probably a shark, but a shark the likes of which we have never seen before," he said. The fish was photographed at a depth of 6,000 feet off San Clemente Island, which is about 75 miles south of Los Angeles.


Something really weird is about to go down at Taco Bell

"THE HEADLESS HORSEMAN."

HOW ONE "GHOST" WAS UNMASKED.

Mr. J. Claney, of Dorrigo, who has interested many people with his story of the "Trotting Cob," was himself interested to read the following paragraph in "The Queenslander" early last month: "A good many years ago I was told of the strange tale of the headless horseman ("Queenslander," 11th July 1895) by one of his victims, the late Charles Nash, but at this distance of time I forget the locality, although it drifts into my mind it was in the Bega district. However, there were several lots of cattle 'smashed up' by the ghost, who generally picked on a mob of fats. So far as I can recall the tale, a drover was never killed. The man who caused the mischief used to ride a fast trotting horse straight through the mob when in camp. He always picked a moonlight night, and was covered with a white sheet with a strap around his neck, and one around his body, holes being cut in the sheet to make a mask for his face. His last ride was when some drovers tied a rope between trees on the track through the cattle camp. The rope caught the 'ghost' under the chin, and laid him out with some violence. He turned out to be a butcher who had various methods of getting cheap beef. That was before the days of slaughter-yard inspection and waybills.—'Battler.'"

Mr. Claney, who was a drover for 26 years, and used to camp on this very ground, says that "Battler" is mistaken about the locality, as the haunt of the "Headless Horseman" was at Black Swamp on Old Man Plain, between Hay and Deniliquin. The first year Mr. Claney camped on this ground was in 1879, the year the Kelly gang broke out. This was twenty years after the mystery of the trotting cob had been solved.

THE HEADLESS HORSEMAN OF HALL'S GAP

There are those who, despite the indisputable and almost inviolable testimony of countless past generations, profess an entire and illogical disbelief in the existence of ghosts. But Barney O'Flynn, after his last New Year's experience, is not one of them, and his story, told here, should go far towards convincing all but the most case-hardened to a right way of thinking.

There had been the usual sports gathering and celebrations at the Gap, as there are on every New Year's Day. When our hero had succeeded in yoking up his horse into the buggy and finally started for home the night was considerably far spent. It was a cloudy, uncertain night, with a late moon—just the kind of night on which you may be sure one might most expect to meet with nocturnal visitors from the other world. By some accident of direction, or some unexplained, psychological working of a horse's soul, old Prince, usually so reliable in his homing instincts, had left the broad path of the tourists' road and had branched off upon a side track, that led a roundabout route through the bush. When Barney awoke to an understanding of the situation they were skirting the lonely, dismal banks of the Black Swamp; and in his ears there sounded a faint, mysterious thud! thud! thud!—not unlike the regular pounding of galloping hoofs, or the rhythmic beating of a man's heart.

He pulled up to listen, staring behind him with strained, excited eyeballs. His mind, at the same time, conjured up hazy recollections of tales of doubtful adventures that had been told him that evening over the camp-fire by his cup-fellows. And as he waited, true to his halting expectation, again came the palpitating sound of thuds; and, coincident with it, away among the darkness thrown by the overhanging trees, flitting swiftly from shadow to shadow, was a monstrous, wraith-like thing, whose identity there was no mistaking.

"My Gawd, it's 'im!" he shrieked, and, turning in his seat, he drew out his

THE YARRA BOX MYSTERY.

MELBOURNE, Thursday.

In connection with the Yarra box mystery, Beatrice Jamieson, a domestic servant, employed in the house where the girl died, made a confession to the police last night.

Beatrice Jamieson states that the body of deceased was that of Mabel Ambrose, a seamstress, residing with her mother at South Yarra, who was brought by Mr. Todd to Madame Radatyske, of Osborne-street, South Yarra, for an operation and died a few days afterwards.

The body was placed in a box, and Mr. Todd brought a buggy.

They then drove with the box to the river, but owing to some people being on the bank of the river, they left the box in a place of concealment, and returned the buggy to the place from which it had been hired.

Beatrice Jamieson and Todd waited till about midnight, when they returned to the spot of concealment, and, placing a stone on the box, sank it.

Todd, who is a popular young man, and a member of the firm of Todd and Daniels, Estate Agents, &c., recently desired to dissolve partnership, and it was reported that he was about to leave the colony.

Last week Todd reported to the Prahran police that his office had been broken into, and that £24 had been stolen.

Last night the police made a pretence of enquiring into the robbery and found him sitting in his office in a chair. Whilst questioning him about the robbery they slipped the handcuffs on him, and charged him with murder.

He seemed staggered, but walked to the lock-up with a jaunty air, and gave his age as 20.

He is the son of a respectable family.

Madame Radatyske, who has also been arrested, is a Russian.

The girl who made the confession stated that no instruments had been used, but an electric battery and drugs had been administered for three days before Mabel Ambrose's death.

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The girl who made the confession stated that no instruments had been used, but an electric battery and drugs had been administered for three days before Mabel Ambrose's death.

Beatrice Jamieson states that she was troubled over the matter, and in consequence could no longer retain the terrible secret.

She has been detained in custody, and will probably be used as a Crown witness.

THE YARRA MYSTERY.

SENSATIONAL STORY OF A FERRYMAN.

THE BOX PROBABLY FROM TOORAK.

OPENING OF THE INQUEST.

The body of the woman which was found in the Yarra on Saturday in a box is still unidentified, but the detectives yesterday became possessed of information which may yet prove to be of the utmost importance in tracing the authors of the crime, although at the present time its value is not great. The sluggish nature of the Yarra, and the excessive weight of the stone affixed to the box in which the body was crushed, led all who saw them to believe that they were cast into the water within a few yards of where they were found, and certainly no further up stream than the Chapel-street bridge. This theory, accepted on all sides by people who know the river well, collapsed yesterday before the undoubted evidence of four young ladies. These ladies, residing in Toorak, had read the story of the mystery in "The Argus," and, with most commendable public spirit, they wrote to Sergeant Carter, of Toorak police station, stating that they could give certain information regarding the box. Detective D. G. O'Donnell lost no time in visiting their home, and he learned from the sisters that the box had been seen fully three-quarters of a mile further up the stream. They stated that at about 5 o'clock on Friday evening last they set out for a walk along the river-bank. They passed down Williams-road from Toorak-road, ascended the hill for a little distance, and then, climbing over the post-and-rail fence, they wandered across the low-lying flat at the foot of the hill until they reached the precipitous edge of the water. In a corner opposite the Richmond quarries, and about two hundred yards down stream from the ferry, which forms the connecting link between Burnley-street on the north and Williams-road on the south, they saw a box.

"There goes some poor person's luggage," cried one girl, sympathetically, and, as if to prove that the article was not one of the usual river derelicts, she drew attention to the fact that it was bound up with rope and wire. The box was of a yellow colour, and of the same size as that at the Morgue, and there can be not the slightest doubt that in the box they were gazing upon was bunched up the body of the dead woman.

The young ladies added that they had noticed two dead dogs lying beside it, and, on visiting the place again on Sunday evening, they had found the box gone, though the dogs were still at the side of the bank. On Detective D. G. O'Donnell and Sergeant Carter accompanying the young ladies to the part of the river spoken of, they found the dogs were still there, though the box had floated fully three-quarters of a mile in the course of 19 hours. This seems travelling of an extremely rapid character, but inquiries made by persons frequenting this part of the river show that the stream is extremely erratic, and that, while some of the flotsam and jetsam is swept rapidly towards the sea, other articles will be sucked to one of the banks, and stay there until decomposition is complete.

The spot where the box was seen was subjected to the keenest examination, but not a sign could be seen of anything having been thrown in, and it was being seriously considered whether the body had not come down from even higher up the river when information of a most startling and sensational character was received from Mr. John Plunkett, who has charge of the ferry at Burnley. On being interviewed last night, Mr. Plunkett said:—

"It was at about 10 o'clock on the night of either the 7th or 8th inst. that I was sitting on the steps of the ferry on the Richmond side. Suddenly I heard a loud splash from the Toorak side of the river about 100 yards below the ferry landing. I was struck by the noise at the time, for it came without the slightest warning, no voices or other sounds preceding it, and by its peculiar character, for it was more like a smack on the surface of the water than an ordinary splash. I have heard dogs thrown in many a time, and I have seen horses tumble in, but this splash certainly arose from neither of these causes, and feeling that it must have been a human being I waited, listening for either a scream or a sound of swimming. It was a dark, still night, and the least sound would have travelled over the surface of the water, but from the time the big splash was heard there was nothing but dead silence."

Mr. Plunkett told his story to Detective Carter, and that officer, together with Detective-sergeant Ward and Detective D. G. O'Donnell, who are associated with him in the case, is completely satisfied that the noise Mr. Plunkett heard was caused by the box being cast into the water. Mr. Plunkett himself is an old sailor, and one of the best-respected men about the river, and his story was related while he was still in ignorance of the information which had come from the four ladies from Toorak earlier in the day.

Mr. Plunkett gives some additional information which seems less important. On the night of either the 9th or 12th inst. he was again seated on the Richmond steps of the ferry, when two young men came along the same bank from the east and passing near him one looked across the water and said, "This is where it is." At that time Mr. Plunkett thinks they were not aware of his presence, but he arose

The Old Pioneering Days

THE HEADLESS HORSEMAN OF BLACK SWAMP

By W.R.C.

AWAY back in the 1870's the Black Swamp, on the road between Deniliquin and Hay, had a bad reputation with cattle drovers, though drovers of sheep did not mind camping there, because sheep do not stampede as readily as cattle.

The camp was supposed to be haunted by a headless horseman, who rode a headless horse.

Hard-bitten stockmen, who did not believe in ghosts, had their cattle stampeded from this camp; and when the cattle were rounded up after daylight it was always found that a fair number of cattle out of any big mob were missing.

Some drovers, who did not believe in the supernatural, actually saw a headless horseman, mounted on a headless horse, galloping into the mob and causing a stampede.

It was impossible, but it happened.

Aggressive Ghost

One drover, Ned Quinn, who believed there was a natural explanation for any seemingly supernatural happening, galloped alongside the headless horseman and tried to pull him out of his saddle. Instead of achieving his object, he was himself unhorsed by a terrific punch on the jaw.

The headless horseman went out of business in the 'eighties of last century because drovers, even if non-believers in the supernatural, arranged their stages so that they would not have to camp at the Black Swamp.

The mystery remained unsolved until in the late 'nineties, an old man who was dying in a hospital in northern Victoria, told the hospital authorities, truthfully or otherwise, that he was the Headless Horseman.

He explained that he wore
ht-colored clothing and
ackened his face and head,
aking them practically in-
ible at night.

His black horse appeared
adless, he said, because it
as whitewashed all over, with
e exception of its head,
hich was very hard to see on
dark night.

Mates of his, he explained,
cked up fair numbers of
ttle from every scattered
rd, and had their own ways
disposing of them.

The dying man's story may
ve been an invention, but no
her explanation of the Head-
ss Horseman has ever been
t forward.

MR. VINCE McNALLY, of Good Hope road, in the southern district lost between 300 and 400 spring chickens in last week's cold snap.

Boot Box Tragedy.

Girl's Confession.

MELBOURNE, January 12.

The boot trunk tragedy was partly elucidated last night when a domestic servant appeared at the detective office and made a statement concerning the alleged crime. The result of the girl's confession was that a woman and a man have been arrested. It appears the name of the woman whose body was found in the trunk was Mabel Ambrose, formerly employed as a seamstress in a Collins street establishment. According to the statement of the informant, the deceased went to the house of the woman about December 10, in company with the man, and desired that an operation should be performed, but no instruments seem to have been used. The informant states that an electric battery was frequently applied to the deceased, and drugs were administered. After this treatment had been going on for a few days the informant noticed the deceased frothing at the mouth, the woman and man referred to were present in the room at the time. The former gave the deceased brandy, and subsequently said she was dead. The girl (informant) made a long statement, describing how the man and herself placed the body in a box at about 9 o'clock on December 14. They took it in a buggy down to the Yarra, via the Toorak road and Williams road. In order to avoid observation they left the box in concealment, and took the buggy back to the place from which it had been hired. The girl (informant) and the man went back to the river at midnight; tying the box with wire and attaching to it a large stone, they sank it in the stream. The informant states that she has been troubled in her conscience ever since, and could no longer retain the terrible secret. The girl, who was employed as a servant in the house, and who helped to dispose of the body, made the statement of her own free will. She said the woman sent her to tell the man that the deceased was dead, which she did. He exclaimed "Good God." On going back to the house the girl saw the deceased again, and saw that she was dead. The woman and herself then talked about getting the body disposed of secretly. The man came round to the cottage later on in the day and stayed there that night. He said he could not look at the body nor touch it, so the two women carried it out of the bedroom, and laid it in the front room. The body remained there till next morning, when the man said it was impossible to get it away that night as he had not a conveyance. It was agreed, at the man's suggestion, that the body should be put into the box belonging to the deceased. Next morning (the 14th) the women placed the corpse in the trunk in which it was found. The man was one who made himself specially popular with all who came in contact with him, and his acquaintances were completely stunned by the news of his alleged association with such a terrible crime. He is of gentlemanly appearance, and active in business. The woman was a tenant in the same building as that in which the man had his office. He is a member of a highly respectable family, and lived in lodgings at Prahran. On Thursday last he stated to the Prahran police that between 11 p.m. on the previous day and 9 o'clock that morning his office had been broken into and £20 in gold and £4 in silver stolen. The robbery was last night made a pretence for an interview by Detectives O'Donnell and Bear, but they found he had left the office. They then went to his lodgings, only to discover that he had just gone back to the office. There he was found sitting in a chair, apparently thinking. The detectives questioned him about the robbery, and when he was furnishing particulars O'Donnell slipped the handcuffs on him and told him that he was charged with murder. The man seemed staggered, but quickly recovered, and without saying a word allowed himself to be taken into custody. He gave the age of 29, although he looks older. He walked to the lockup with a jaunty air. The woman in custody has a daughter aged 13 years living with friends at Cheltenham. The girl (informant) was introduced to her about six months ago, and acted as her assistant. The deceased was a native of South Yarra, and resided in Grosvenor street with her mother. She was 17 years of age.

Man who wanted to be a fish

By HEATHER KENNEDY

A MAN who reportedly always wanted to be a fish came to grief on dry land in a bizarre accident under investigation by police.

Neil Gordon Wilson, 49, was found dead dressed in a fish suit in a paddock near picturesque Toolondo Reservoir about 390km west of Melbourne on November 29.

It is believed Mr Wilson may have accidentally suffocated as he returned from trying out his fish suit in the reservoir.

"Mr Wilson was wearing a heavy green plastic bodysuit which he had made of old waterbed material from the tip," a police spokesman said.

"He had sewn the suit together. He put a lot of work into it.

"It had round holes for eyes, but no holes for the nose or mouth and no other ventilation.

"Both legs fitted into the one 'leg'. The suit zipped right up the back.

"The way the suit was designed would have made movement extremely restricted."

How he ended up in the middle of the paddock is a mystery itself as he would not have been able to walk in the suit — he could only jump.

Mr Wilson's badly decomposed body was discovered four days after his father reported him missing.

The Melbourne man, whose family kept a holiday house at Toolondo, was well known to locals.

A local resident, who declined to be named, claimed Mr Wilson used to wear the fish outfit in the lake and swing from a rope while he pretended to be a fish.

"He wanted to be a fish," the man said.

A second fish outfit in yellow was found in the Wilson's garage.

However, police rejected suggestions Mr Wilson made a habit of wearing fish suits.

"This was something new," the spokesman said.

The results of an autopsy on Mr Wilson's remains will not be available until after an inquest.



Artist's impression of the fish suit

The Yarra Tragedy.

The mystery surrounding the death of the girl who was found in a box on the Yarra has at length been cleared up. A domestic servant named Beatrice Jamieson has made a statement to the police, implicating herself, a man named Todd, and a Madame Redalsky, a Russian, at whose house Jamieson was employed. About November 22 or 23 the dead girl, whose name was Mabel Ambrose, a seamstress, in company with Todd went to Redalsky's house and desired that an operation should be performed. An electric battery was frequently applied to the deceased, to whom drugs were also administered. After a few days the girl noticed that Ambrose was frothing at the mouth, and she died shortly afterwards. The body, Jamieson says, was placed in the box by her and Todd, and about 9 o'clock on the night of December 14 they took it in a buggy down to the Yarra, going by way of Toorak road and Williams road. They saw a man and woman sitting on the bank of the river, and were prevented for the time being from carrying out their intention of consigning the box with its gruesome contents to the water. As a means of safety they hid the trunk in a clump of bushes, and went back to Melbourne. About 11 o'clock the same night they returned to the river bank, and after waiting about an hour removed the box to the water's edge, and weighted it with a large stone secured by means of a piece of wire rope. These precautions having been completed the box was pushed into the river. For a few moments it floated with the stream, but soon sank from view.

Todd, who was arrested, subsequently made a confession, bearing out the statements of the girl Jamieson. He said he met the deceased woman, Ambrose, in a certain house some time in October, and was there intimate with her. Madame Redalsky offered to treat her for Todd's sake, and said that the treatment would be by galvanic battery. This, however, was unsuccessful. Todd is an estate agent in Melbourne. The three accused were brought before the City Court on Wednesday morning and remanded.


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India puts 18 lions on trial for murder

stuff.co.nz

http://www.stuff.co.nz/world/asia/81080705/india-puts-18-lions-on-trial-for-murder-and-the-culprit-may-get-a-life-zoo-sentence

stuff MAX BEARAK

Last updated 09:47, June 15 2016



PHIL NOBLE A male Asiatic lion is seen at Chester Zoo, northern England, in this file photograph.

Police have rounded up 18 male suspects wanted for the murder of three in Gujarat, an arid western Indian state.

If one is found guilty, he will be sentenced to life in prison. Or, a kind of prison at least: a zoo. The suspects are all Asiatic lions.

The species is endangered, and its population has dwindled as human settlements encroach on its remaining habitat. As that process speeds up, humans and lions are, of course, more likely to come into contact, leading to murders that go both ways.



PHIL NOBLE If one lion is found guilty, he will be sentenced to life in prison. Or, a kind of prison at least: a zoo. (File photograph)

There are approximately 400 Asiatic lions left in the wild, and they are the only lion population outside of Africa. Wildlife officials in India say that Gir National Park, where almost all these lions live, can only accommodate 270 of them, leading some prides to venture outside its boundaries.

India's Supreme Court recently ordered Gujarat to relocate some of its lions to other states, but the state is yet to comply.

The 18 lions now in custody will have their paw-prints and feces tested, which police believe could indicate which is the culprit.

"The officials are also studying the animals' behaviour. Man eating lions usually get aggressive at the sight of a human being," wildlife expert Ruchi Dave told the BBC.

J.A. Khan, Gujarat's top forest official, said, "We think we have pinpointed the guilty lion, but we are still awaiting the results of nine more animals."



Chris Ratcliffe India has rounded up 18 Asiatic lions, similar to these ones in London zoo.



B MATHUR An average Asiatic Lion, also known as the Indian Lion, weighs between 200 to 250 kg.

Once the "guilty animal" is identified, he will be transferred to a zoo, and the others will be released back into the wild.

Emailnewstips@stuff.co.nz

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State police pay $195K to man jailed over soap

2016-07-14 mcall.com

The Pennsylvania State Police paid $195,000 to settle a New York man's claims he was wrongly jailed for nearly a month after troopers using a field drug test mistook soap for cocaine, a court document obtained by The Morning Call shows.

Pa. state police pay $195K to settle New York man jailed for bricks of soap.

Pennsylvania State Police paid $195,000 to settle a New York man's claims he was wrongly jailed for nearly a month after troopers using a field drug test mistook soap for cocaine, a court document obtained by The Morning Call shows.

Alexander Bernstein of Brooklyn also settled claims in his federal lawsuit against Safariland LLC, the company that produced the allegedly faulty drug test that troopers used during the November 2013 traffic stop in Lehigh County when Bernstein and a traveling companion were arrested, his lawyer said.

Attorney Joshua Karoly of Allentown said he could not discuss the terms of either settlement, except that the parties had reached mutually agreeable resolutions and agreed not to discuss them.

The Morning Call obtained a copy of the state police settlement by requesting it under Pennsylvania's Right-to-Know Law. Bernstein's settlement with Safariland is not subject to the public records law.

State police and Safariland did not return calls seeking comment Thursday.

While Bernstein was behind bars, he lost his job, his apartment and his possessions, rendering him homeless and destitute, the lawsuit claimed.

Bernstein's lawsuit was cited in a ProPublica investigation published July 7 in The New York Times Magazine as one of several around the country attacking the reliability of roadside chemical tests to identify drugs.

The investigation noted that tests produced by manufacturers including Safariland are not regulated, are subject to user error and misinterpretation, and can produce false positives from dozens of chemicals other than illegal drugs, including medications and household cleaners.

ProPublica estimated that at least 100,000 people across the country plead guilty each year to drug possession charges that are based solely on field tests.

"At that volume, even the most modest of error rates could produce thousands of wrongful convictions," the investigation says.

After being stopped by Pennsylvania troopers on Interstate 78 in South Whitehall Township, Bernstein and Anadel Cruz of New York were charged with possession with intent to deliver cocaine, possession of cocaine, conspiracy and possession of drug paraphernalia.

A search of their rented Mercedes-Benz revealed two brick-size packages covered in clear plastic and red tape, according to the police report. Cruz, who was the driver, told the troopers they contained homemade soap for her sister, whom Cruz was traveling to visit in Florida, it says.

But the troopers — Nicholas Goldsmith and Justin Julius — insisted the packages, which together weighed more than 5 pounds, contained "a controlled substance of some kind," Bernstein's lawsuit claimed. The troopers said they also found a small amount of marijuana in Cruz's bra.

Bernstein and Cruz were taken to a state police barracks where, Bernstein alleged, he overheard the troopers agree to a conspiracy in which they would falsely report negative field test results as positive.

The lawsuit also contains an alternative theory alleging that Safariland's field test kit was defective because it produced two separate false positive results. California-based Safariland makes and sells firearms accessories, forensic investigation tools and safety equipment for police.

Bernstein, 33, was held for 29 days in Lehigh County Prison under $500,000 bail until it was reduced and he was able to post $25,000.

After Bernstein and Cruz were released on bail, on the day a preliminary hearing was scheduled, police dropped the charges.

Bernstein was required to pay more than $32,000 in bail and court costs, plus pay a defense attorney and fees associated with having the arrest expunged from his record, the suit claimed.

"And even then, the FBI, the internet and other media sources will still contain a permanent record of his arrest and the criminal charges upon which he was maliciously prosecuted," the suit claimed.

After the charges were dismissed, Karoly and Allentown attorney Robert Goldman, who defended Cruz, called their arrests a clear case of racial profiling. They noted the troopers stopped a Hispanic woman driving a luxury car with out-of-state license plates late at night.

The reasons troopers gave to justify the stop were specious, Goldman said. The affidavit of probable cause said Cruz was driving nearly 60 mph in a 55 mph zone and they saw her tires riding on a dividing line, he noted.

"Hopefully law enforcement learns something from this episode, and hopefully prosecutors, that it isn't always what it appears," Goldman said.

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22 girls held in Novita, Choco

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Posted: Yesterday 14:13 h.

publimetro.co

Monday July 11, 2016

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Panic in

Getty Images Photo:

Chocó for Alleged diabolic possession of 22 girls

The children, Between 12 and 15 years, Were taken to a medical center Nóvita, after suffering the same symptoms in Their school.

Apparently, the incident occurred in the school day , When girls from different classrooms Began Having strange behaviors, in Addition to seizures and fainting, Said News Caracol .

Initially four teenagers Were taken to the health center by the same teachers of the institution, but minutes later came other groups, collapsing the emergency department.

Parents Reported to the Media That Screamed and writhed all girls. "They came in screaming, Mentioning incoherently, hallucinating, foaming at the mouth," Said the Dr. Jair Ruiz.

After practicing them medical tests to rule Several out disease, intoxication or use of hallucinogenic substances, the results did not produce any health problems.

"It is not quite find anything, His vital signs are good," Said Ruiz.

What did you see?

One of the minor Told what was what I saw During the hours I was possessed: "There was a man dressed in black and I was saying That a child Had the sheet with red letters and if I burned the blade, killed us all."

The largest of the municipality, Deyler Camacho, the villagers Asked To Remain calm and not allow esta case to Become mass hysteria. While the shepherd of the population, César Perea, prayerfully Asked to combat witchcraft.

According To RCN, in esta population, something like last year Happened, When 10 girls Had to Be Treated by strange behavior.

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22 schoolgirls 'suffered mass demonic possession' and foamed at mouth after playing game of 'Charlie Charlie'

15:46, 12 Jul 2016 Updated 18:06, 12 Jul 2016 By Stephen Jones

mirror.co.uk



This is the chilling moment 22 schoolgirls - aged between 12 and 15 - 'suffered mass demonic possession' after playing a game of 'Charlie Charlie'.

The children were screaming, writhing and hallucinating - and some were even foaming at the mouth.

One victim claimed she could see a 'man dressed in black' while possessed - and locals are praying against witchcraft as authorities warn against playing the game.

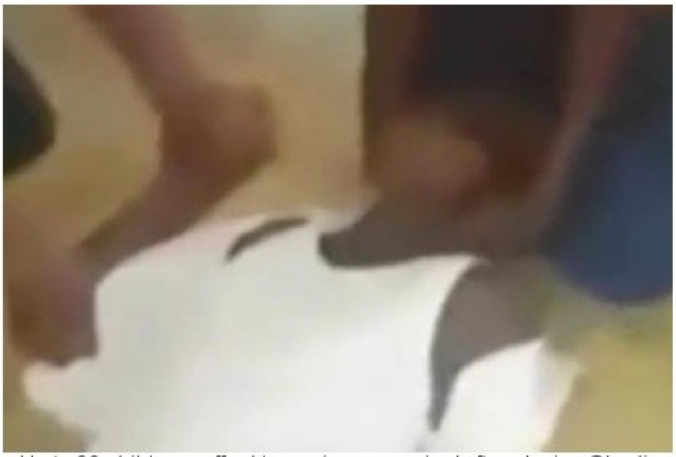
The traumatic incident happened on Saturday in the Choco region of Colombia which borders with Panama.

The children were rushed from their school to to a medical centre in Nóvita - all suffering with the same symptoms.

Chaotic scenes can be seen on video footage taken at the hospital which shows children being held down while fitting on the floor.

Local News Caracol reports the incident occurred during the school day, when girls from different classrooms began acting strangely - as well as suffering seizures and fainting.

It was reported that they were playing a game of 'Charlie Charlie' - a simplified version of Magic 8-Ball where teenagers use balanced pencils to produce answers to questions they ask.



Up to 22 children suffer 'demonic possession' after playing Charlie Charlie

Up to 22 children suffer 'demonic possession' after playing Charlie Charlie

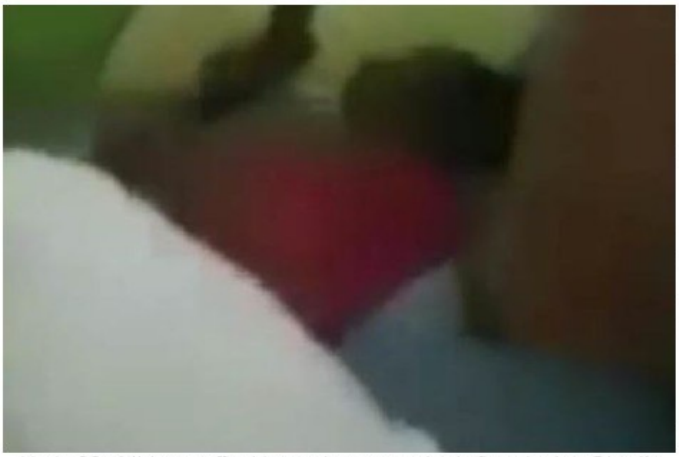
At first just four teenagers were taken to the health centre by their teachers - but minutes later other groups followed - putting stress on the emergency department's resources.

Parents told the media that all girls were screaming and writhing.

Doctor Jair Ruiz said: "They came in screaming, mumbling incoherently, hallucinating, foaming at the mouth."

After conducting several medical tests to rule out disease, intoxication or use of hallucinogenic

substances, experts failed to uncover any consistent health problems whatsoever and the girls' vital signs returned to normal.



Up to 22 children suffer 'demonic possession' after playing Charlie Charlie

Up to 22 children suffer 'demonic possession' after playing Charlie Charlie

One of the girls is said to have explained what she saw while she was possessed.

She said: "There was a man dressed in black and he said that a child had the sheet with red letters and if he burned the sheet, we kill them all. "

Local mayor Deyler Camacho asked villagers to remain calm and not to allow this case to develop into collective hysteria.

Authorities have been visiting every child affected - along with 'spiritual advisors'.

Local pastor César Perea meanwhile prayed against witchcraft.

According to RCN something similar happened last year when seven girls from this region had to be treated for "odd behaviour" after playing the game 'Charlie Charlie' - and officials warned against this.

One affected child said afterwards: "You can end up dead playing these games because it's the work of the devil."

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S. Carolina megachurch ousts founder as senior pastor

ap.org

Jul. 10, 2016 4:42 PM EDT

ANDERSON, S.C. (AP) — The founder of South Carolina's massive NewSpring Church has been ousted as senior pastor over problems including alcohol use.

The Independent Mail in Anderson reports (http://goo.gl/1yPf95) that another church leader, executive pastor Shane Duffey, announced at a Sunday service that the Christian church had removed the Rev. Perry Noble on July 1.

Duffey cited Noble's "unfortunate choices" and said the church's board had confronted Noble multiple times about his drinking.

A statement attributed to Noble and read during the service confirmed that he overused alcohol, and said "No one is more disappointed in me than I am in myself."

Noble didn't immediately respond to an email Sunday from The Associated Press.

The church traces its roots to a Bible study that began in Noble's apartment in 1998. It has grown to 17 locations around South Carolina, 30,000 people attend services each week, according to its website. The annual report posted there said the church took in about $64 million for 2015.

Information from: Anderson Independent-Mail, http://www.andersonsc.com

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8 weird and wonderful Victorian discoveries

Wednesday 29th April 2015

historyextra.com

BBC History Magazine logo

History Revealed magazine logo

It was an age of experimentation and innovation, and of great advances in the steamship, railway and the electric telegraph. But the Victorian period also saw a number of more unusual discoveries...



Wearing newspapers for warmth, c19th century. (Courtesy of Caroline Rochford)

In her book, *Great Victorian Discoveries: Astounding Revelations and Misguided Assumptions*, Caroline Rochford examines some of the incredible findings made across the world between 1875 and 1895. Here, writing for *History Extra*, she shares some of her highlights...

The Victorians lived in an age when knowledge could be shared faster than ever before. New railways and steamships had made it easier for intrepid explorers to visit regions of the world hitherto unseen by western eyes; telephones enabled communication across vast distances, and speedier printing presses ensured the delivery of the latest news to almost every household in the land. Meanwhile, those with a thirst for knowledge were able to read about the astounding discoveries of natural historians, who published thrilling accounts of the strange new plants and creatures they'd encountered during their forages.

Indeed, modern technology had kick-started an information revolution in every field of science. With the aid of photography, microscopes and other new contraptions, researchers were happening upon daily discoveries that promised to change the way the world worked. These many remarkable discoveries were described in the pages of forgotten Victorian compendia, which revealed the wondrous experiments and bizarre theories of the great – and not-so-great – minds of science, engineering and natural history.

1) The four-legged bird

Since the publication in 1859 of Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*, mankind has been captivated by the theory of evolution. In 1885 an American naturalist, Edward Morris Brigham, took great pleasure in announcing the discovery – made in 1881 – of an astonishing type of bird that lived by the banks of the Amazon River: the creature's most incredible characteristic was that it was born with four feet.

The discovery was so contrary to the accepted order of things that it baffled scientists of the age. Even more curious was that this South American creature was four-footed only in its early life – one pair of legs developed into a set of wings some time after hatching. This was a trait akin to the regenerative power of lizards, which have the ability to regrow lost limbs, thus Brigham's discovery seemed to confirm the evolutionary theory that birds are descended from dinosaurs.

Brigham was lucky enough to catch a glimpse of the elusive creature, and he compared its likeness to a pheasant. The bird, commonly known as the 'cigana' or 'gypsy bird', couldn't sing; instead it uttered doleful and demonic cries, as if in mourning. This was an eerie sound in the dead of night, when the bird was active.

2) The electricity plant

In 1885 an unusual, tropical plant termed the *phytolacca electrica* was discovered on the torrid plain of

Hindustan [the northern/northwestern subcontinent]. When in full bloom, this extraordinary species generated a strong current of electricity that flowed all the way through it, from root to tip.

The indigenous people who lived in the region regarded it with awe and reverence, never daring to get too close. Birds and insects that came into contact with the tree were killed at once, but most had learned to keep well away.

When the stem of the plant or a twig was snapped by hand, an intense electric shock was felt, reportedly causing even the strongest man to stagger backwards. Magnetic compasses – even at a distance of up to 20 feet – were reportedly affected by the plant's power.

Curiously, the electric current was said to vary throughout the day, being at its strongest at about 2pm and most feeble during the night. In the rainy season the plant became completely dormant, yet its energy increased by a marked degree during thunderstorms.



The phytolacca electrica, c19th century. (Courtesy of Caroline Rochford)

3) Local anaesthetic

Victorian surgeons had long sought an anaesthetic which, when applied externally to a given part of the body, would render it completely void of feeling for a certain length of time, without the need to send the patient to sleep. This numbing property was discovered in 1884, completely by chance, by a German medical student, whose research quickly spread to America.

The substance in question was hydrochlorate of cocaine, which had been known about, but not widely used, since the mid-19th century. After accidentally splashing some of it in his eye, the student was surprised to find that it caused his eyeball to become insensitive to the touch. Further trials served to confirm this remarkable observation, and an eminent oculist in New York later performed cataract surgery on the eye of a patient without causing her any pain whatsoever.

Had it not been for this total fluke – and the absence of safety goggles – this early local anaesthetic may never have been discovered.

4) The land of the giants

Mankind's oldest legends are peppered with tales of giants who once roamed the landscape, causing unspeakable mayhem for the regular-sized inhabitants of the earth. From David and Goliath to *Jack and the Beanstalk*, so frequent were the references to oversized beings that the Victorians seriously wondered whether or not a race of exceedingly tall men once existed on earth but later became extinct.

One of the investigators was Count Georges Vacher de Lapouge, a French anthropologist who made a remarkable discovery in a prehistoric burial ground at Castelnau-le-Lez, near Montpellier. In 1890 he uncovered portions of a human skeleton from the Neolithic period, which, by his calculations, came from a man who stood nearly 12ft tall. The remains were sent for examination by a team of professors at the University of Montpellier, and later by the Montpellier School of Medicine, who confirmed that the bones appeared to belong to a race of "very tall" men.

Strangely enough, an old French fable placed the cavern of a giant in the same valley of Castelnau.

5) Mankind's lost magnetic sense

In 1883, the great scientist Lord Kelvin proposed a theory that the human race possessed both a 'sixth sense' –

heat and force combined – and a 'seventh sense': that of magnetism. As such, the phenomenon of clairvoyance could be explained by the fact that some people were in tune with their magnetic sense much better than others.

Unaware of what they were picking up on, they interpreted the sensation as the presence of some invisible being, perhaps even a spirit from beyond the grave. Following a series of experiments, several people were found who, when their heads were placed between the poles of a strong electromagnet, could tell when it was turned on.

Kelvin's theory was largely forgotten about until the 1970s, when a team of scientists revisited the subject. Through their researches they discovered that the human nose consists of bones and sinews that may once have been receptive to the earth's magnetic field, thereby acting as a kind of in-built compass, which, during the course of evolution, became functionless.

The presence of such magnetic bones offers an explanation for how migratory animals manage to successfully navigate vast distances, and also points to the likely etymology of the old expression 'follow your nose'.

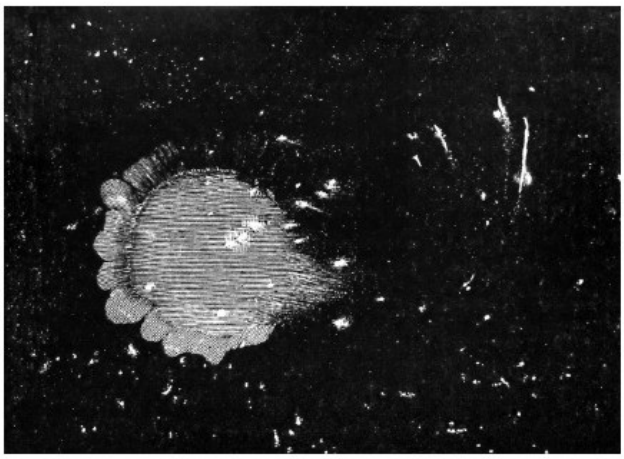
6) Ball lightning

Nobody truly knows how or why the extraordinary phenomenon known as ball lightning is caused, but during the 19th century, hundreds of well-attested instances were chronicled.

Owing to its rarity, no photographs of the lightning had ever been taken – until, that is, 17 July 1891, at about 10.15pm. If genuine, this is the first ever photograph of ball lightning, and for more than a century it remained the only known example in existence, until Chinese scientists succeeded in capturing the phenomenon on film during a lightning storm in 2012.

The photograph of 1891 was taken by Mr Dunn, an ironmonger's son, from the window of his father's residence in Newcastle-on-Tyne, which overlooked the river. A thunderstorm was raging overhead, and a great ball of fire suddenly appeared over the river, reportedly moving as fast as a man could run. It was estimated to measure about 2ft in diameter, and when it came opposite the Dunn household it vanished. But before it did so, Mr Dunn managed to expose a plate in his camera.

Over the centuries, further sightings have continued to shake the nerves of witnesses and rattle the brains of many leading experts, who thus far have been unable to offer a definitive explanation for the phenomenon.



Ball lightning, c19th century. (Courtesy of Caroline Rochford)

7) Wearing newspapers

The innovative Victorians were always searching for new ways to improve their quality of life – from generating cleaner energy and recycling waste, to trying out new gardening and interior design techniques.

Without the luxury of central heating or electric blankets, winter nights were often long and cold. In the days when diseases were harder to cure, it was essential to keep warm, thereby reducing the risk of contracting a potentially fatal illness such as pneumonia.

In 1875 health officials recommended that before covering up for the night, two or three large newspapers were to be spread over the entire body and blankets thrown over the top. The result was a warm and comfortable sleep.

Similarly, before taking a cold ride on a boat or coach, or a long walk against the wind, if a newspaper was spread over the chest before buttoning up the overcoat, no chill was felt. No other method for keeping warm was found to be as cheap or effective as this.

8) The discovery of Atlantis

With so much exploration underway, the ancient legend of Atlantis [a fictional island mentioned within an allegory in Plato's works *Timaeus* and *Critias*] was once again revisited by learned men of the late 19th century, keen to learn its true location at last.

The notable zoologist Charles Émile Blanchard believed that at some point within the human geological period, the region of Labrador in Canada was once connected to Europe by a now subterranean link of land that ran from Scotland, through the Orkney and Faroe Islands, to Iceland and Greenland. Upon investigation, the sea over this supposed tract of land was found to be comparatively shallow, and the islands in questions were therefore, Blanchard deduced, vestiges of the lost land.

His theory was supported by the fact that European animals and plants existed in America alongside species that were atypical to the western continent. Anemones, violets, roses, orchids and lilies were common to both. Certain beetles, spiders and other insects were also found on either side of the Atlantic. The reindeer of Lapland was plentiful in North America; the beaver was a native of the two continents, and so was the river perch, which never left fresh water. This being the case, how did this fish cross the salty Atlantic ocean if the two continents were never connected?

It wasn't the main thrust of his research, but had Blanchard's study led him to the discovery of this mythical lost land?

Caroline Rochford is the author of *Great Victorian Discoveries: Astounding Revelations and Misguided Assumptions*, (Amberley Publishing, 2015). To find out more, click here.

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Grolar or pizzly? Nope, just a blond grizzly bear

2016/06/21 cbc.ca

CBC CBCnews *cbc masthead logo* radio one *host picture*

DNA analysis confirms bear was not, in fact, a polar-grizzly mix

By Katherine Barton, CBC News Posted: Jun 21, 2016 11:11 AM CT
Last Updated: Jun 21, 2016 4:11 PM CT



Hunter Didji Ishalook kneels next to the bear he killed near Arviat, Nunavut, in May. (Submitted by Didji Ishalook)

It turns out an odd-looking bear shot and killed by a hunter in Arviat, Nunavut, last month wasn't a hybrid of a polar bear and a grizzly bear — it was a blond grizzly.

- Experts say rare grizzly-polar bear hybrid shot in Nunavut

The hunter, Didji Ishalook, described the animal as being shaped like a grizzly, but with the colouring of a polar bear. "It turned out to be a grizzly half-breed," he said at the time.

But Nunavut's Department of Environment (DOE) has confirmed that the "unusual" bear is not a hybrid.

"DOE submitted a tissue sample to a genetics lab for DNA analysis in order to verify the ancestry of the harvested bear," Carrie Harbidge, an environmental education specialist, told CBC News.

"The DNA lab concludes that the animal was a blond grizzly bear, and it does not have a polar bear parent. Therefore, the harvested bear was not a hybrid."

People got 'carried away'

"From people on the ground, in the field, it was somewhat obvious that the results would come [out] that way," says Mathieu Dumond, a wildlife manager for Nunavut's environment department. "I think the excitement of a few hybrids found in the western part of Nunavut and in N.W.T ... got people carried away a little bit."

Ishalook had consulted with elders in Arviat before concluding the bear he'd shot was a mix. At the time, CBC News also spoke with a Minnesota-based leading bear expert, who concurred.

Dumond says that's why it was important to verify the assessment with genetic testing, especially since there have been two or three confirmed cases of grizzly-polar bear mixes.

"It's so rare that unfortunately I think nobody has a lot of experience in identifying a hybrid from the first sight."

Blond grizzlies are far less rare, he adds: "While it's not maybe the most common colour for the fur



Nunavut's environment department says this 'unusual' looking bear is a blond grizzly bear and not a grizzly-polar bear mix, as some first believed. (Submitted by Didji Ishalook)

... it's not something extraordinary. Every year we see some that are blond."

CBC

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A Mammoth-Sized Ghost (Literally!)

7 Comments | August 26, 2015 | Nick Redfern

As most people who read my articles here at Mysterious Universe will know, my main areas of interest are Cryptozoology and Ufology. I rarely ever get into ghosts, haunted houses, and related issues, however. Only because the collective subject doesn't really interest me that much. Now and again, though, I find myself on the receiving end of a story that has cryptozoological ingredients, but which also has ghostly overtones attached to it. On such occasions, I do get involved.

A perfect example is the account of a woman named Jill O'Brien. She had a bizarre encounter – in September 2008 – in Alaska's Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve. It was an encounter that I was able to personally investigate in early January 2009, as Jill had then recently moved to Oklahoma City, which is not that long a drive from my Arlington, Texas home. So, it was time for a road-trip and a notable interview. Jill's story was as intriguing as it was bizarre.



Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve

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Before I get to the story, however, a bit of background on Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve. Established in 1980 by Alaska's National Interest Lands Conservation Act, it's the largest US National Park and covers in excess of 13 million acres. It was at the base of the park's Mount St. Elias – which stands to a height of 18,009 feet – that Jill's extraordinary encounter occurred. As a keen traveler and photographer, Jill was in the area specifically to get shots of the mountain. She got her pictures. And she got something else, too.

When I say that Jill's encounter was of the ghostly variety, don't be assuming that we're talking about chain-rattling ghosts, wailing spirits, or similar such things. Nope. Not at all. We're talking about what Jill came to believe was the ghostly, spectral form of a baby mammoth. Yeah, you did read that right. As Jill prepared to take one particular photo of Mount St. Elias, she heard what she described to me as "thudding" and "crunching" on the ground, and coming from somewhere behind her.

Her first, terrifying thought was "bear." Thankfully, it was not. Jill found herself confronted by a very small mammoth, one that was somewhere in the region of four-feet in height, or maybe slightly bigger. Now, for years, reports have surfaced and circulated suggesting that – against all the odds – in certain parts of the world the mammoth survived extinction and still lives.

I have investigated a lot of cases involving alleged, surviving mammoths. Personally, and for the record, I don't think the mammoth is still with us. It's just not feasible. I do, however, think there is enough circumstantial evidence to suggest it may have clung on for far longer than many suspect. But that's quite another story for another day. Those excited by the prospect that mammoths still live today should note I'm *not* suggesting Jill saw a young, living, breathing, mammoth. And it's most assuredly not what Jill was suggesting, either. You'll see why.



As Jill watched in a mixture of awe and shock, the mini-mammoth raced past her and...*vanished*. Gone. When I asked Jill to explain what she meant, she said that the animal was suddenly enveloped by a small "black cloud," which "sucked into itself" and disappeared. The entire encounter lasted barely a handful of seconds at most. Jill was, however, very sure of what she had seen. In her opinion it was nothing less than the ghost of a long-dead mammoth.

Whether Jill's case is one for ghost-hunters, or for cryptozoologists, is something well worth pondering on. In terms of the latter, it all depends on how one defines the term "cryptozoology." If we're talking about cryptozoology solely being the study of unknown animals, then no, it's clearly *not* one for the cryptozoologists. Personally, however, I'm *very* far from convinced that so-called cryptids are mere flesh-and-blood and nothing else. And, for that reason, I do take note of rogue cases like the one told to me by Jill.

Of course, Jill's testimony – combined with her opinions on what she encountered back in 2008 – is the kind of thing that most ghost-hunters would eagerly want to tackle too. This raises an interesting possibility. One day the fields of creature-seeking and specter-seeking might come together – and even work together – to solve certain, odd and unusual cases like this.

I have a suspicion that the ghost-hunting community will be eager and up for it. As for the field of cryptozoology, I can already see them steaming with red-faced rage and planning to send me hate-mail by the sack-load. Whatever! The fact is that such odd reports crop up on more than a few occasions. Witnesses like Jill need to be taken seriously and treated with respect. Such accounts need to be treated seriously too. Maybe ghost-hunters and monster-hunters can learn a thing or several from one another. Or is that just asking way too much? Unfortunately, from the cryptozoological end, yes it probably is.

TAGS: ghost, Mammoth, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park

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mitziflyte • a year ago

I might have missed it but I didn't see anything in the discussions about a possible time or dimensional warp. That could explain the solidness of the figure and the fact it made sounds. My husband tells a story about when he was driving across PA that he and the friend with him suddenly saw a tropical scene where mountains usually stand. He's always considered it a time warp. Whatever it was, she was quite lucky to have seen the little (?) creature.

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Typhon • a year ago

Interesting article...
I have been wondering where the idea of this being a ghost is coming from? The mammoth is not translucent, it's movement seems to make noises as normal, etc. As far as I can glean from your article the mammoth seems to normally interact with ist sourroundings until it vanishes....

There are other reports of ghostly mammoths on the net, but they usually have some ghostly traits like passing through solid objects, floating a bit off ground, feet being in the ground while it is walking, etc.

If we want to venture out into truly fortean territory I would rather guess a time-slip/overlap of timelines or something like that instead of the mammoth being a ghost...

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

Julie ➔ Typhon • a year ago
I was thinking the same thing!
^ | v • Reply • Share ›



eddi • a year ago
Apropos of the last paragraph, the metaphysics field can no long sneer at regular science for "not looking at the facts". They have long ago specialized into their own niches and ignore blandly or viciously anything that doesn't fit their handful of pigeon holes. There may be no Grand Unification Theory of the Fantastic possible given the wide variety of experiences of witnesses and the difficulty of interpretation of hard evidence. and it is really not being helped by the ease which hoaxers and frauds can create events from whole cloth with nothing but a keyboard and Internet access.
1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

NickRedfern ➔ eddi • a year ago
Yeah, dealing with hoaxers can be a real problem. But I have found a fairly solid way of identifying them. Instead of just interviewing people - like Jill - I always also ask them to sign a consent form for the story to be used in an article or book, if they are agreeable about having the story told, of course. Most book-publishers (certainly all the ones I'm with) require consent forms from ALL interviewees. Of the people I have suspected of being hoaxers, hardly any are willing to sign the form. That is a pattern I find interesting, and leads me to believe they fear legal backlash as a result of their lie; so they refuse to sign. And it's a good way to identify a hoaxer too.
4 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



eddi ➔ NickRedfern • a year ago
They are either worried about legal consequences or greedy enough not to want to give the story away when a less skeptical person might pay well. Either way a red flag.
^ | v • Reply • Share ›



steve philbrook ➔ eddi • a year ago
Or on the other hand, it could all be different aspects of one phenomenon. I would actually be disappointed if all this crazy stuff is solved. The mystery is fun.
2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

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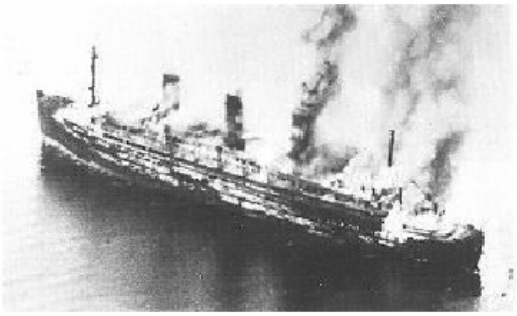
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Professor Tells the Secret Story of the 'Nazi Titanic'

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Accidental bombing of Cap Arcona killed thousands of concentration-camp inmates

By Kate Seamons, Newser Staff
Posted Jun 13, 2016 8:29 AM CDT
http://www.newser.com/story/226584/professor-tells-the-secret-story-of-the-nazi-titanic.html



The burning Cap Arcona shortly after the attack. (Wikimedia / Royal Air Force)

(NEWSER) – The ship was fashioned after the Titanic, and met an end no less tragic, but the tale of the Cap Arcona—and the thousands of concentration-camp prisoners who lost their lives aboard it—is one you've likely never heard. The "Nazi Titanic" gets its due in a new book of the same name by Robert P. Watson, a historian and professor at Florida's Lynn University. The German luxury liner was built in 1927 and traversed the Atlantic 91 times, reports the Columbus Dispatch in a review of the book. During WWII, it played the role of the Titanic in a Nazi propaganda film made to depict the English in a bad light (that ended up being a bust), but it otherwise sat at port in the Baltic Sea until the war's final month, when Adolf Hitler had the ship packed mostly with concentration-camp prisoners. Records unearthed by Watson indicated Hitler intended to have a U-boat destroy the ship.

Citing "crossed signals" and fears the Nazi leaders would employ the boats in the harbor to flee to Norway, the Deseret News reports the British Royal Air Force bombed the Cap Arcona four days before all German forces surrendered, killing nearly all aboard (the Jerusalem Post reports it was carrying at least 4,500 prisoners, of which roughly 350 survived, to the Titanic's 1,517 dead). Though victims' remains washed ashore for more than 25 years, the incident was essentially kept "secret for seven decades," per Watson, who first learned of the ship when he came across a letter from a WWII solider that made mention of it. Incredibly, the Sun Sentinel reports he reached out to scholars at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, and even they were unaware of the ship. Watson pieced together the story after being granted access to British archives, which the Palm Beach Post reports were to remain sealed for 100 years. (Thousands of items that vanished from Auschwitz have been found.)

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Pushy Swan Becomes Local Star — and Almost Gets Arrested

nbcnews.com

Alfred the Pushy Swan Causes a Stir in Essen Kettwig, Germany

by Andy Eckardt



MAINZ, Germany — Police were called to an ice-cream parlor after a suspect demanded food and smashed a customer's coffee cup over the floor.

This was no ordinary troublemaker, however, but Alfred the swan.

The animal has become well known in Essen Kettwig, around 30 miles north of the German city of Cologne, after leaving the Ruhr river and roaming the town's cafes and shopping streets this summer.

"We serve him only water, but some of our guests feed him once in a while," said 24-year old Sara Hettchen, who owns one of Alfred's favorite haunts. "Sometimes he is already waiting outside and knocks on the window with his beak."

Every morning the bird waddles into the the Bridge Café in the hope of being served a treat from its cake display. Despite the animal's occasional petulant outbursts, Alfred has even become this summer's main attraction for some customers.

"He is very sweet, I can even pet him," said Hettchen, who named the animal but does not know its gender.

If this all sounds very genial, things take a different tone as soon as the bird doesn't get its way.

Alfred the swan. ZDF

"After a customer refused to give food to the begging swan, it swiped the man's coffee cup off the table," said Davide Tizza, who works at the ice cream parlor across the street.

Outraged, the customer immediately called the police. But the police officers dispatched to the scene only asked "if the man expected them to press charges against the swan," Tizza told NBC News' German partner ZDF.

Despite his brush with the law, Alfred continues to rove through the town at its leisure, stopping only for photo shoots with passersby and regular snacks.

First Published Jul 16 2016, 5:43 am ET

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Rock legend Alice Cooper launches hunt for werewolf running free in UK city

14:40, 31 May 2016 Updated 14:45, 31 May 2016 By Samantha Yule

mirror.co.uk



SWNS.com

Rock legend Alice Cooper has launched a hunt for a werewolf in Hull

Rock legend Alice Cooper has been appealing for more information about claims an eight foot werewolf is running free in Hull.

Seven eye witnesses claim to have spotted a werewolf type animal lurking in an abandoned industrial area outside the East Yorkshire city centre.

Locals have dubbed the mystery creature 'Beast of Barmston Drain' provoking the interest of the original shock horror legend.

The 68-year-old hard rock star, who is a fan of horror and the macabre - often using blood, snakes and electric chairs in his shocking shows - has taken to Facebook to ask if the sightings are for real.



SWNS.com

Glam rock legend Alice Cooper's post highlighting the urban myth of a half-man half-dog creature which has been seen in Hull

He wrote on his page: "So there are suddenly several reports of a werewolf like creature near a small town in the UK. Do you think it could be real?"

Residents and folklore experts believe the sightings are linked to a mythical beast called 'Old Stinker'.



SWNS.com

Barmston Drain where urban legend tells that a half-man half-dog has been seen in Hull

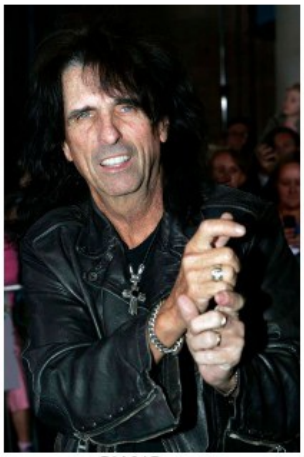
According to a centuries-old legend the half man, half dog, prowls the Yorkshire Wolds.

One woman claims to have seen it turn from man to beast as she stood quaking on a bridge above.

Alice Cooper wants to know more about the werewolf spotted in Hull

A couple reported seeing "something tall and hairy" eating a German Shepherd dog next to the Drain.

They stopped to get a closer look and saw it jump an 8ft high fence before vanishing into the night,



SWNS.com

its prey still in its jaws.

And a woman walking her dog along the watercourse spotted something "half-man, half-dog" in the distance.

But rather than sparking a debate about werewolves, his post irked his followers for calling Hull - next year's City of Culture - a small town in the UK.

One user wrote: "Hull is a city, not a town. Anyway this creature seems very new, it's never been mentioned in Hull's myth and folklore of the past."

Others contemplated 'Hull-themed' ways of killing the beast.

One user wrote: "We're gonna need an exorcism with chip spice..."

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TwasBrillig
lol the poll is hilarious

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'It was like a blessing': Man finds Allah written in a watermelon

metro.co.uk

http://metro.co.uk/2016/06/15/it-was-like-a-blessing-man-finds-allah-written-in-a-watermelon-5945900/

Jen Mills for Metro.co.ukWednesday 15 Jun 2016 12:34 pm



'It was like a blessing': Man finds Allah written in a watermelon

Asif Iqbal said it was 'like a blessing' (Picture: SWNS)

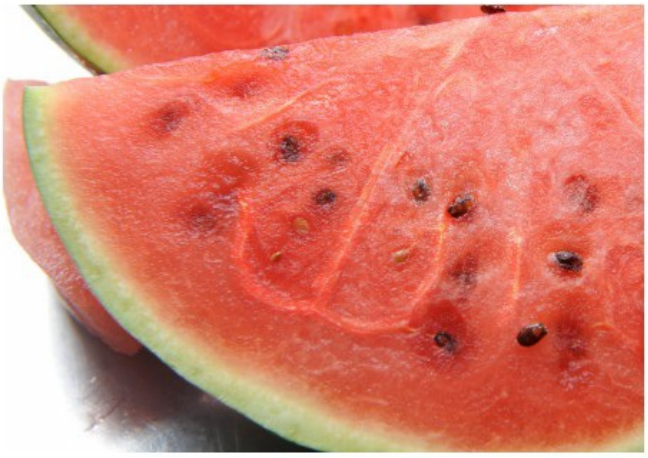
A man from Leicester believes he has found 'Allah' written in Arabic script after cutting open a watermelon.

Asif Iqbal, 31, was so stunned by the finding that he gathered his whole family to see and news then spread to others in the neighbourhood.

'People have been coming round to see the name – and we've given pieces of it away too,' he said. 'I'd love to tell you how many people have been here but I honestly lost count, it's been non-stop.'

He bought the fruit for just £2 in Tesco and was ready to eat it when he spotted the wording last Thursday.

'I have spoken to a scholar and he said this is just one of those things that reminds the world that Allah does exist,' Asif, a father of four, said.



MORE: This seriously creepy picture is freaking the internet out – does it affect you?

'I was shocked when we found the name, it was like a blessing – and to have something like that come during Ramadan, too, that makes it even more special.'

The revelation comes midway through the holy month of Ramadan, when Muslims fast from dawn to sunset to mark the time they believe Allah revealed the Quran to Mohammed in Arabic.

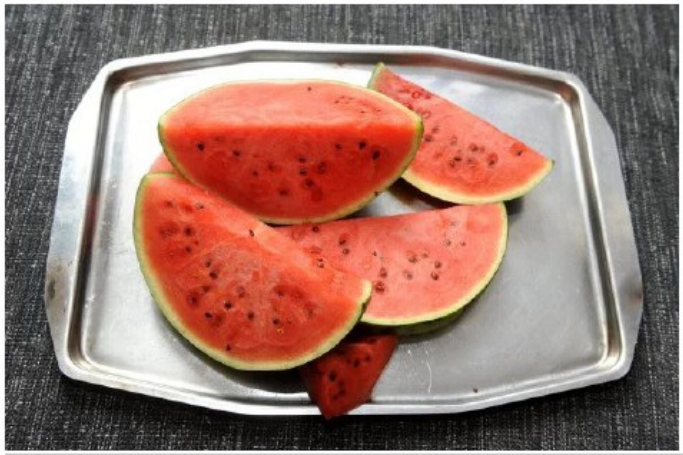
It looks like an ordinary fruit at first (Picture: SWNS)

Humans have killed off the first mammal due to climate change

Last year another Muslim couple from Leicester found an egg with the name of Allah embossed on the shell.



'It was like a blessing': Man finds Allah written in a watermelon



Farid Jussab, 37, and wife Anisa, 36, claim they were ‘blessed by a miracle’ after the markings spelled out ‘None to be worshipped except Allah’.

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ALMANAQUE LA TRACA 1933



60 cts

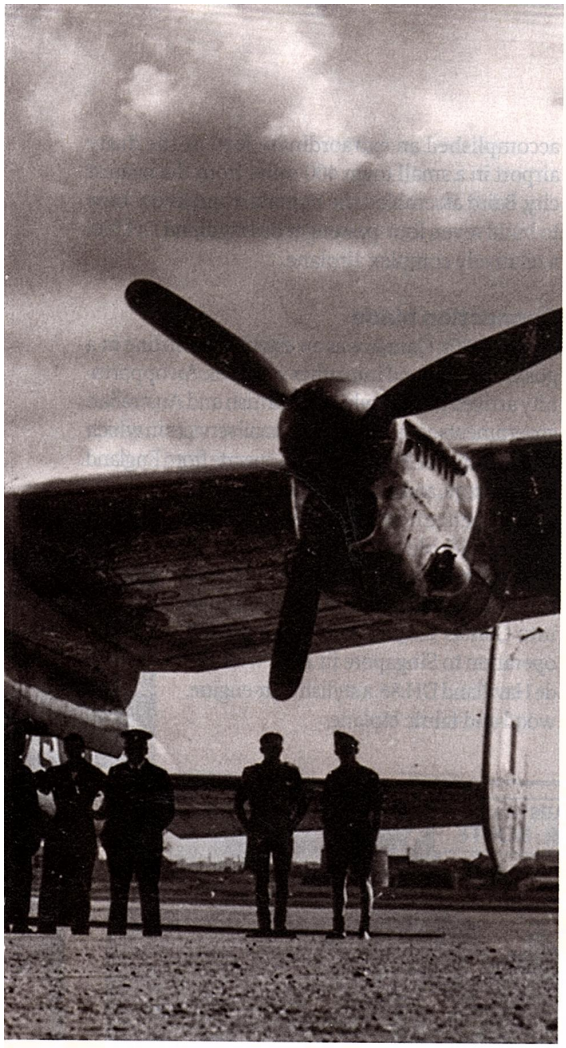


THE IMPOSS

LONDON TO SYDNEY: 12,000 MILES THAT STARTED AN AIRLINE.

THE AVRO LANCASTRIAN VH-EAV BOUND FOR Auckland, New Zealand, was, on November 17, 1951, lined up for takeoff from Sydney Airport, Australia. Its destination was about seven hours' flying time over the Tasman Sea, but the aircraft never made it. As it accelerated into its takeoff run, the Lancastrian veered to the left, its natural tendency. Following standard procedure, the captain applied right rudder as he advanced the throttles, with the number one engine leading, to compensate. Unfortunately, the number one engine failed. The ensuing accident report states that "corrective action by the captain failed to prevent the aircraft leaving the runway." Seconds after VH-EAV departed the pavement, its landing gear collapsed, and it crashed in a shallow ditch, damaged beyond repair. Fortunately, the seven crew members escaped without injury. Airline employee John Brownjohn, who visited the scene the next morning, noted "that a man with a pot of paint and large brush had visited during the night, his task the customary obliteration of the name of the airline after a crash." The name painted over: Qantas Empire Airways. Through a combination of Australian audacity and British protectionism,

QANTAS HERITAGE COLLECTION



IBLE FLIGHT

BY BRIAN VAN DE WATER

Qantas was operating what was then the longest airline route in the world, along which the now-ruined Lancastrian had played a vital role.

Operating the 12,000-mile trek from Sydney to London, known as the Kangaroo Route, was a logistical and engineering challenge eventually met only by modern jets. The Lancastrian was the airline's interim solution. It had been extensively modified to carry spare Wright Cyclone engines for the U.S.-built Lockheed Constellations Qantas was operating on the route. Because of the length of the journey and the frequency of piston engine failures at the time, Qantas needed a way to get spare engines to each of the 16 airports between a flight's origin and its destination.

A Not-So-Small World After All

Throughout the formative years of Qantas, all planning and policies centered on one reality: Australia's geographical isolation from Europe. In 1919 the prime minister of Australia, William "Billy" Hughes, offered a prize of £10,000 to the first Australians to fly from London, England, to Darwin, Australia, in the hope this would lead to regular air service between the two countries. Six aircraft started the race in late 1919, but only two completed the journey. The winners, brothers Ross and Keith Smith, took 27 days; Ray Parer, in second place, took seven months. The results left no doubt that the challenges of the 12,000-mile distance were far beyond the capability of passenger-carrying aircraft at the time.

Two World War I veterans, Hudson Fysh and Paul McGinness, failed to attract sponsors to compete in the race, but were contracted to survey a shorter route: the one the competitors would follow once they reached northern Australia, over the vast states of Queensland and the Northern Territory. Fysh and McGinness traveled 1,300 miles in a Model T Ford, and became convinced that the widely scattered towns and cattle ranches would benefit from an air service for passengers and mail. They decided to start an airline connecting the two states.



Hudson Fysh and Paul McGinness (below, in 1919) founded Qantas in 1920. The airline would use the Avro Lancastrian both to ferry passengers (opposite, in 1945) and to carry engines, using a specially designed pod slung underneath the fuselage.

Fysh, 25 years old in 1920, had worked as a cowboy on a sheep station before joining the army in 1914. By 1918 he was an observer in Bristol Fighters flown by McGinness; for their actions in the Middle East conflict, the pair were awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. Despite a limited education, Fysh became an astute businessman who for 46 years navigated Qantas through negotiations with sometimes-hostile organizations and governments. (He was knighted in 1953 for his long service to Australian aviation.)

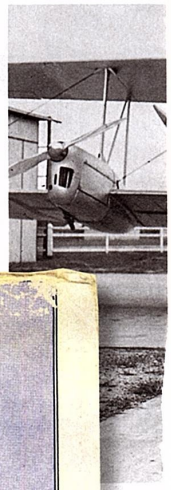
Fysh and McGinness teamed up with 42-year-old

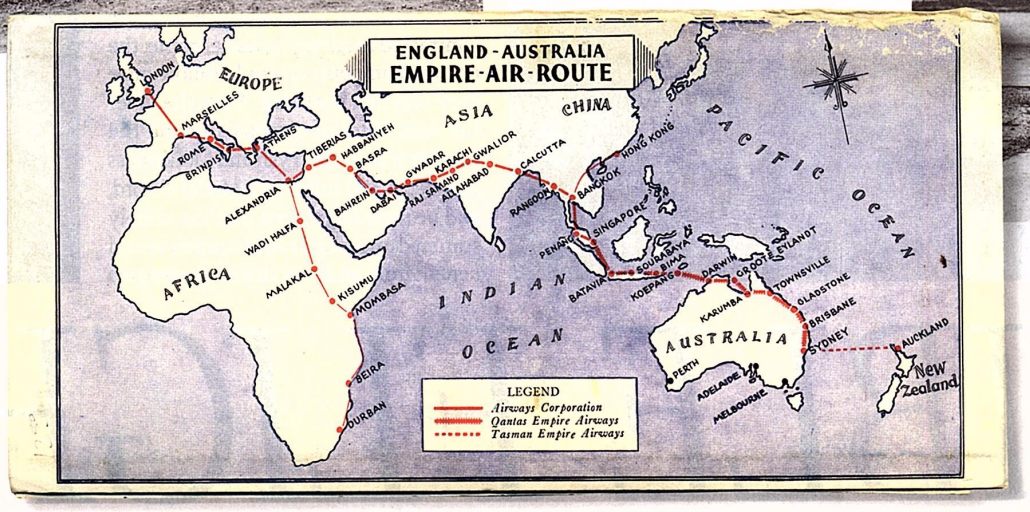
QANTAS

Fergus McMaster, who raised capital for the venture. Registered as Queensland and Northern Territory Aerial Services, the name was later shortened to QANTAS. (Unaware that it is an acronym, generations have either misspelled it or wondered why it has no "u.") McMaster served as chairman of the company for 27 years.

The first aircraft purchased was a two-passenger Avro 504K, and the first scheduled service departed November 1922. The passenger was 84-year-old Alexander Kennedy, an Outback pioneer who agreed to back the company with £250 provided he was given ticket number 1.







The company's first scheduled fight, on November 2, 1922, was a simple hop inaugurating airmail service from Charleville to Cloncurry. By 1935, Qantas was transporting passengers and mail all the way from Sydney to Singapore.

To keep their wood-and-fabric aircraft operating in remote areas, subjected to both extreme heat and monsoonal rains, and to coordinate spare parts delivery involving weeks of travel by ship from England, the company hired Arthur Baird, who had been McGinness and Fysh's flight sergeant during the war. By the 1920s the airline had grown enough to require larger aircraft, and under Baird's supervision, Qantas, still a small organization, accomplished an extraordinary feat: At the dusty airport in a small town 400 miles from the nearest city, Baird assembled the materials and know-how to build seven four-passenger de Havilland DH.50s, a relatively complex airplane.

Connection Made

By the 1930s, Qantas was an established airline in a position to expand into other ventures. An opportunity arrived in 1933 when the British and Australian governments agreed to set up airmail services in which British Imperial Airways would operate from England to Singapore, and an Australian company would operate from Singapore to Sydney. The formidable team of McMaster and Fysh submitted the successful bid, and the small inland airline was transformed into Qantas Empire Airways. It started operation to Singapore in 1934 with the de Havilland DH.86, a stylish four-engine, wood-and-fabric biplane.

That aircraft was soon obsolescent, however, and Qantas required carriers that were more modern. But the airline wouldn't order the DC-3, which other airlines in Australia used. While the ban on U.S. commercial aircraft was lifted in 1936, says Qantas historian David Crotty, "the DC-3 was unsuitable for the long-haul U.K.-Australia route as there was a requirement to carry a large amount of mail as well as passengers. The flying boat was the only viable means of doing both in the absence of the larger landplanes and numerous large airfields that only appeared during and after World War II." In 1937, Qantas replaced the DH.86 with the four-engine Short C class Empire flying boat, manufactured in

TOP LEFT AND CENTER: QANTAS (2); LEFT: COURTESY SFO MUSEUM

Rochester, Kent, and operated it without loss until 1942, when the Japanese army invaded Singapore, severing the air route.

As World War II drew to an end, Fysh traveled to England to arrange resumption of direct flights between Australia and England. Qantas' counterpart in the United Kingdom, British Overseas Airways Corporation, or BOAC (formerly Imperial Airways), announced it would introduce the Avro Tudor in 1947, followed by the Bristol Brabazon in 1950. In the meantime, it would use a fleet of Avro Lancastrians (converted Lancasters) and Hythe flying boats. Qantas



In 1935, passengers flew on the de Havilland DH.86, left, a stylish, four-engine wood-and-fabric biplane.

was expected to follow suit. Facing an indeterminate period with obsolete aircraft, a dismayed Fysh wrote to chairman McMaster: "[S]erious consideration must be given to employment of American type aircraft and therefore wish to recommend acquisition of the Lockheed Constellation with 48 seats by day, convertible to 22 bunks at night."

Qantas introduced Lancastrians and Hythe flying boats on the Kangaroo Route in 1946, but later that year ordered four 749 Constellations. BOAC continued its policy to buy British. Because the two carriers were operating "entirely different types, with different economics and passenger appeal," Fysh recalled in his memoir *Wings to the World*, the boards decided that each would operate its own service between London and Sydney. Qantas would now operate all the way to London and carry the full burden of spares and equipment. That responsibility required a spare Wright Cyclone TC18BD engine to be available at each of the 16 airports between Sydney and London—a seemingly excessive number for just four aircraft, but Qantas would soon find that four more engines were urgently required.

The Constellations started flights to England in late 1947, and these quickly presented major problems: Engine failures occurred at airports as far as 50 flying hours from Sydney. The four-engine Constellation was soon branded "the best three-engine airliner in the world."

Today we are used to the remarkable dependability of modern jet engines, so it is difficult to fathom the failure rate of the Constellation's Wright Cyclones. Each aircraft averaged two to three failures per year. They were so common they received no publicity. The only consequence was accommodating passengers for a day while the engine was changed. Occasionally two engines would fail. Flight engineer Fred Burke recalled one such instance in 1954 in an oral history in the Qantas archives: "Number 2 engine failed before arrival at Singapore, the engine change delaying the aircraft for 24 hours. Shortly after take-off the next day number 4 engine failed and, during the shut-down drill, the propeller on the replacement engine went into overspeed, a dangerous condition which I addressed by shutting down that engine. There was no time to dump fuel, and in an overweight aircraft with only two engines running, my eyes were firmly focused



The crew readies for the first test flight of the modified "Pregnant" Lanc, in May 1949. In command was Captain John Morton, in black. Ron Yates, at right, designed the fairing modification that gave the aircraft its bulge.

on the sea wall right at the threshold of the runway, which had been impacted by a BOAC 749 not long before with heavy loss of life." Qantas was then faced with four flights to transport engines: one to send an engine to replace the failed number 4, two to send the failed engines to Sydney, and one to restore a spare engine in Singapore. Each flight took 35 hours.

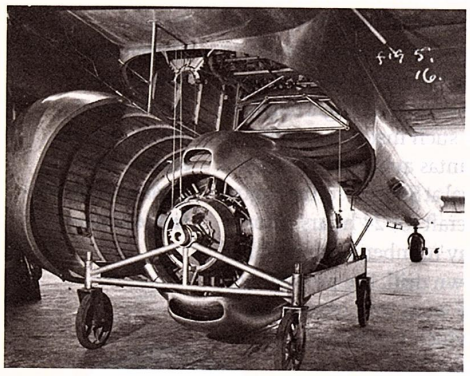
Since 1945, cargo and spare engines had been transported around the Qantas network by two Consolidated LB-30 Liberators, but by 1948 they were nearing the end of their lives. A replacement aircraft with suitable speed and range was required, preferably from within the fleet. Qantas's Lancastrians were no longer being used for passenger flights, but the

FAR RIGHT: COURTESY SFO MUSEUM; RIGHT: COURTESY BRIAN VAN DE WATER

transport's fuselage was too slim to accommodate an engine. The Lancastrian carried only nine passengers, facing sideways.

The senior engineer at Qantas devised a solution. Ron Yates, who had been a flight test engineer with the Royal Australian Air Force during World War II, reasoned that the ferried engine could be suspended from the normally sealed bomb bay, but this would require an aerodynamic fairing. With the aid of six draftsmen, Yates set about developing it.

On the Kangaroo route, spare engines were often needed, so the Lancastrian carried a Wright Cyclone suspended in the bomb bay (below).



The resulting structure was a semi-monocoque fairing about 21 feet long and six feet deep. The effect of the fairing on the flying qualities of the Lancastrian could be determined only by a test flight, however. The engineers feared the engine carrier modification would diminish the Lancastrian's directional stability—the ability to resist sideslip, or yaw.

Construction of the fairing and the matching changes to the structure of the aircraft were accomplished completely within the Qantas workshops. With the large bulge beneath its fuselage, the aircraft became known as the Pregnant Lanc. Its test flight was made on May 17, 1949, commanded by Captain John "Minnie" Morton, a transport pilot who was senior training captain on Lancastrians. The remainder of the crew comprised a first officer, a radio operator, and Yates as observer. Arthur Lonegan, then a 17-year-old Qantas apprentice, vividly remembers the four-person crew wearing parachutes and lining up for a photograph (previous page) in which Yates displays cheery confidence, and the others appear more reflective. Many years later, First Officer Cec Zuber, a wartime Spitfire pilot, revealed that he was more apprehensive on this occasion than he had been before combat missions.

The flight would be impossible with the safety standards of today: The Australian airworthiness authority had sanctioned a major aerodynamic modification of a four-engine aircraft with uncertain effects on flight stability, and agreed to an experimental flight commanded by an airline captain, not a qualified test pilot.

The first flight was eventful, although the difficulties were in no way caused by the fairing. Morton lost airspeed indication, and then the radio failed. In a 1995 oral history, he said: "I carried out several circuits over the aerodrome as it was the only way to let the people below know we had problems. With almost two years of flying and instructing on the Lancastrian, landing without airspeed was not one of the procedures covered. On both sides of the runway, at intervals of about 200 yards, there were so many fire engines that we could not count them."

As expected, directional stability was degraded. By experimenting during the one-hour test flight, the crew found that minor flap extension restored directional stability. Thereafter, the aircraft was always flown with a minimum flap setting fixed mechanically at 10 degrees. The other surprise was



Above: A BOAC Lancastrian passenger transport undergoes maintenance at a Qantas facility in 1946.

TOP: COURTESY BRIAN VAN DE WATER; LEFT: NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA

that the fairing reduced level speed by 2 to 3 knots and the fixed-flap setting by a further 7 to 8 knots.

After the two test flights, a Certificate of Airworthiness was granted. Registered VH-EAV, the Pregnant Lanc was assigned to flight crew training on May 23, 1949, and departed on its first mission on August 18, 1949, carrying a Cyclone engine to Karachi.

The Lanc's Demise

All operators of the Lancastrian suffered an unfortunate level of accidents. Of the 54 Lancastrians operated by BOAC, British South American Airways, and Skyways, 14 were destroyed in accidents between 1946 and 1949. Nine were operated by Qantas, and these suffered eight accidents leading to either complete destruction or extensive structural damage. All but one accident occurred on takeoff or landing.

For pilots graduating from flying boats, for which virtually unlimited landing distances were available and approach speeds were much lower, landing a Lancastrian presented challenges. Every airport between Sydney and London was only 5,000 to 6,000 feet in length, and landings were purely visual, requiring critical judgment. The difficulty was compounded by inefficient braking and the absence of reverse thrust. A misjudged speed required a split-second decision to either go around or continue the landing with the risk of an overrun and a ground loop, and the final indignity of a landing gear collapse.



During its two-year career, the Pregnant Lanc made 32 "engine relief" round trips ferrying 64 engines; it carried a replacement engine to the location where a failure occurred, then carried the failed engine back to Sydney. The farthest journey was to Cairo, a round trip of at least 12 to 14 days.

The only time the Constellation's engine failures received any publicity was in 1958, when the Queen Mother visited Australia. Qantas offered to fly her and her staff back to the United Kingdom via Africa on a Super Constellation. An engine and cowling were damaged at Mauritius, which caused almost four days' delay as a spare was flown in from Perth. Another engine failed in Kampala, Uganda, causing a delay of 18 hours before the flight continued to Malta, where there was a third engine failure. At this point the Queen Mother reluctantly said goodbye to Qantas and returned to the United Kingdom on BOAC.

The Pregnant Lanc's 1951 takeoff accident, on its final flight, was the third that particular Lancastrian had experienced. After seven previous accidents, the loss of VH-EAV was the last straw and undoubtedly hastened the departure of Lancastrians from the Australian airline industry. Qantas retired them all in 1952.



The Short C class Empire flying boat, above, had a range of 760 miles. Left: Qantas purchased Douglas DC-3s after World War II; 14 were in service by early 1950.

The Constellations remained in service until the late 1950s, when Qantas received its first Boeing 707. The jet cut flying time in half—traveling the Kangaroo Route in 57 hours rather than 103—without raising fares. After the loss of the Pregnant Lanc, engine transportation was taken over by Douglas C-54 Skymasters. Qantas would share the spare-engine burden with BOAC, which had finally made the previously unthinkable purchase of Constellations in 1949.

Today, nearly 20 airlines fly the Kangaroo Route, most making just one stop and averaging 22 hours flight time. But back in 1989, an aircraft made the long trip with no stops. When the first Qantas 747-400 was delivered to London, preparations were made for the first nonstop civil flight to Sydney. The 367-seat *City of Canberra* carried only 24 people and was stripped of all non-essentials in order to reduce the aircraft's weight. The 747 set a new speed record when it touched down in Sydney just 20 hours, 9 minutes, and 5 seconds after leaving London.

TOP RIGHT: COURTESY RETROGRAPHIK; RIGHT: QANTAS

Another dodgy art restoration raises alarm in Spain
08/06 thelocal.es

THE LOCAL es

Another dodgy art restoration raises alarm in Spain

Jessica Jones · 19 Jul 2016, 14:31

Published: 19 Jul 2016 14:31 GMT+02:00

Spain is getting a reputation for not taking care of its cultural heritage as preservation experts slam the latest bodged restoration project.

An amateur artist in the Spanish town of Peñaranda de Bracamonte took a restoration of a 17th century statue into their own hands recently, with less than satisfactory results.

The unknown parishioner gave the statue of Saint Michael the Archangel in the Chapel of Humilladero a makeover, much to the dismay of restoration experts.

The original statue is pictured on the right and the restored version on the left.

The restoration attempt, which includes adding a pair of pronounced black eyebrows and giving the statue a shiny coat of paint, was uncovered during a recent visit to the town of Peñaranda de Bracamonte, near Salamanca by a group of Heritage experts.

It had not been reported to the bishop or local authorities and had, until then, seemingly gone unnoticed.

The restoration attempt has been criticized by experts, who argue that Spain is not doing enough to protect its cultural heritage.

“Our work is very serious, professional and specific and not as easy as you might imagine,” María Luisa López, secretary of the Association of Conservationists and Restorers of Castilla and Leon, told Catalan daily, La Vanguardia.

The association has criticized the lack of legal protection for artwork and items of cultural heritage in Spain, as well as the absence of a general governing body that can oversee and approve restorations.

Spain is no stranger to botched restorations, the most famous being the repainting of Ecce Homo, which made international headlines after a Spanish pensioner’s attempt to spruce up a fresco of Christ went terribly wrong.

Cecilia Giménez gained worldwide notoriety when she repainted the fresco in her hometown of Borja, near Zaragoza, in 2012.

The botch job had an unforeseen affect on the town; thousands of visitors flocked to see the painting, which had become the butt of a million jokes.

The town is now receiving so many tourists it is building a visitors' centre dedicated to its most infamous artwork, which has even inspired an opera.

And Spanish botch jobs do not end at paintings. The restoration of an ancient Moorish castle in 2016 gained worldwide notoriety after an architect turned it into something resembling a concrete block.

The Castillo de Matrera, in Cádiz, southern Spain was built in the ninth century and has been a national monument since 1949.

"They've wrecked it," said one local following the restoration attempt, although the architect was vindicated when his controversial restoration won a presitigious architecture prize.

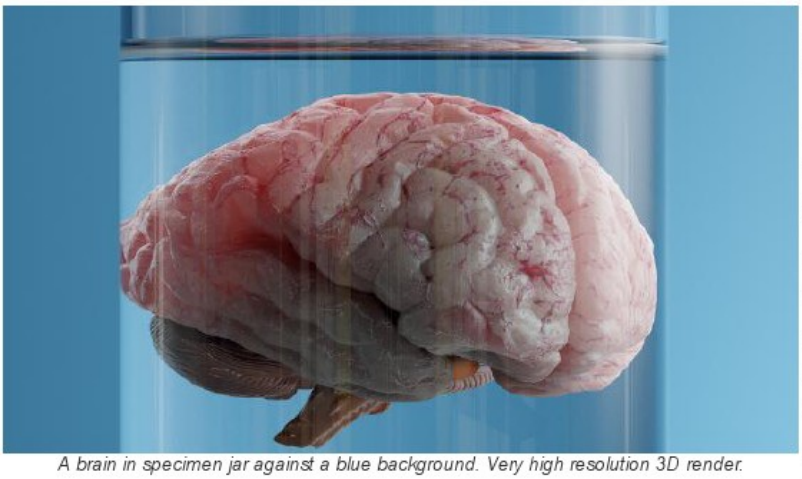
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28014 Madrid
España

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Are we just brains in a jar living in a fake reality?

03/08/2016 news.com.au

August 3, 20167:32pm



A brain in specimen jar against a blue background. Very high resolution 3D render.

A SCIENTIST has claimed we could all just be brains in jars living in a fake reality created by an evil genius.

Laura D'Olimpio, Senior Lecturer in Philosophy, University of Notre Dame Australia, has written about her theory in The Conversation, and suggests humans may be taking part in a science experiment.

She puts forward people's brains are being kept alive in a vat of nutrients that sits on a laboratory bench.

"The nerve endings of your brain are connected to a supercomputer that feeds you all the sensations of everyday life. This is why you think you're living a completely normal life," she suggests in the essay.

"Do you still exist? Are you still even 'you'? And is the world as you know it a figment of your imagination or an illusion constructed by this evil scientist?

"Can you say with absolute certainty that it's not true? Could you prove to someone that you aren't actually a brain in a vat?"

She is not the first to make this suggestion. The philosopher Hilary Putnam said we could all just be brains-in-a-vat in his 1981 book, *Reason, Truth and History*.



Are we actually just living in the Matrix?

*Source:*Supplied

But it was French philosopher René Descartes who originally came up with the idea — saying we were all being controlled in his 1641 Meditations on First Philosophy.

"It is from Descartes that we get classical sceptical queries favoured by philosophers such as: how can we be sure that we are awake right now and not asleep, dreaming," he said.

"To take this challenge to our assumed knowledge further, Descartes imagines there exists an omnipotent, malicious demon that deceives us, leading us to believe we are living our lives when, in fact, reality could be very different to how it appears to us.

"While such thought experiments might seem glib — and perhaps a little unsettling — they serve a useful purpose."

However, for those who may be horrified of a Matrix style existence really being real — there is one way we can provide proof we really do exist.

"At least we can be sure that we ourselves exist, because every time we doubt that, there must exist an 'I' that is doing the doubting," D'Olimpio said.

"This consolation results in the famous expression cogito ergo sum, or 'I think therefore I am'.

"So, yes, you may well be a brain in a vat and your experience of the world may be a computer simulation programmed by an evil genius. But, rest assured, at least you're thinking."

This story originally appeared in The Sun and has been republished with permission.

Comments on this story

- **Jon** *Posted at 4:36 PM August 04, 2016*

  Sounds like someone plagiarized Futurama, floating brains, brains, BRAINS!!!. BTW, the answer is 42, everyone knows that.

Comment 1 of 50

- **Adanuff** *Posted at 4:17 PM August 04, 2016*

  Now I know why there are so many Idiots walking and driving around, not to mention politicians, they left their brains in a jar at home.

Comment 2 of 50

- **Dave** *Posted at 3:33 PM August 04, 2016*

  Evil genius is a troll. Why make the healthy foods taste like junk food and vice versa? Why must we interact with others and not be world rulers (where we rule bots - virtual humans) and hence no conflicts

Comment 3 of 50

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Army site's new owner plans to preserve rare white deer herd

July 5, 2016 yahoo.com

https://www.yahoo.com/news/army-sites-owner-plans-preserve-rare-white-deer-151501100.html?nhp=1



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FILE - In this Feb. 27, 2007 file photo, a white white-tailed deer looks up at the former Seneca Army Depot where there is a herd of rare white white-tailed deer, in Romulus, N.Y. The rare herd of white deer that multiplied at a World War II weapons depot under the protection of the U.S. Army is now being nurtured by the new owner of the New York site. Seneca Iron Works owner Earl Martin has planted 15 acres of soybeans to improve the diet of the deer roaming the former the depot in the Finger Lakes. (AP Photo/David Duprey, File)

ROMULUS, N.Y. (AP) — A rare herd of ghostly white deer that multiplied at a World War II weapons depot under the protection of the U.S. Army is now being nurtured by the site's new owner.

Seneca Iron Works owner Earl Martin has planted 15 acres of soybeans to improve the diet of the deer roaming the former Seneca Army Depot in the Finger Lakes, and is working with a nonprofit group to develop about 1,500 acres of the 7,000-acre site as a wildlife preserve and ecotourism park.

"The idea is to create tourism and wildlife conservation in the northern part of the depot and develop businesses in the southern portion," Bob Aronson, executive director of the Seneca County Industrial Development Agency, said in a recent interview.

Martin's winning $900,000 bid, announced last month, includes plans to create 200 jobs, expand his iron works business, establish about 20 Amish homesteads and renovate a short-line railroad.

Preserving the white deer was a priority of wildlife groups when the depot was put up for sale.

The deer aren't albinos, but are a natural mutation of common white-tailed deer. In the wild, white deer have short lifespans, because they are easy targets for predators and hunters. But the 24-mile fence that encloses the depot and the Army's protective policies allowed the white deer to multiply in peace among more than 500 concrete munitions storage bunkers.

Aronson and Martin are including the nonprofit group Seneca White Deer in development plans. The group was among the other bidders for the property, one of the largest developable sites in the region.

Dennis Money, who heads the group, noted that the herd of white deer has fallen from about 200 eight years ago to about 75 today.

"One of the primary things we need to do is improve habitat and food availability to help bring the deer back up to the numbers there were before," Money said. Normal brown deer have also decreased, he said. "We need to put in better quality foods, like clover, turnips, soybeans and corn."

Seneca White Deer ran some bus tours at the depot between 2006 and 2012. Money envisions future tours that will include not only the deer, but also the history of what was one of the most important Cold War storehouses of bombs and ammunition.

"We're hoping maybe in 2017 it will be opened to the general population," Money said.

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The Arrival of Guernsey Evacuees in Weymouth, June 1940 - Port Towns and Urban Cultures

port.ac.uk

http://porttowns.port.ac.uk/the-arrival-of-guernsey-evacuees-in-weymouth-june-1940/

Port Towns and Urban Cultures
By Gillian Mawson on June 14, 2015 in article, notfeature

In June 1940, 17,000 people were evacuated from Guernsey, to Weymouth, just days before their island was occupied by Germany – see http://porttowns.port.ac.uk/1940-evacuation-st-peter-port-guernsey-england/

The evacuation ships reached Weymouth where the evacuees sat for hours, waiting for permission to disembark. As Winifred Le Page stepped onto dry land, she was approached by French interpreters, "They didn't think we could speak English.



hAZEL hALLS EVAC SUITCASE, PURSE AND ID LABELS

One person said 'We thought you'd all be in grass skirts', and that upset us all, I can tell you!"[1] The evacuees were led into the Pavilion Theatre where they registered their details, received refreshments and underwent a medical inspection. Gavin Dorey recalled, "Goodness knows what they were trying to detect, but perhaps, as refugees from a distant land we were under automatic suspicion of having exotic diseases like leprosy or beri beri.[2] Hazel Hall still possesses her medical label which stated 'NAD' – Nothing abnormal detected.[3]

Miss Grace Fry travelled as a helper with Vauvert School, and as her group registered, an air raid began, "The children and I were pushed out of the building onto a bus, then to my horror, the driver locked the door and disappeared. We were there for about an hour, I had given up. Then the driver unlocked the door and said 'Out!' I had to feel with my foot under the seats in the dark to check whether I had all the children or not."[4] Gladys Merrien was searching for her husband who had promised to follow her. Her daughter Beryl recalls, "Someone told Mum that Dad was staying in Guernsey to look after our house and business. Also, many animals in the islands were being shot at that time. So Dad was reluctant to leave his horse, Laddie, as he would have to shoot it."[5] Guernsey men of military age were dealt with separately. Between eight and ten thousand islanders joined the British Forces, athough it was not compulsory for them to do so.[6]



Disevacsarriv cropped reduced

Because the South coast was experiencing air raids the evacuees were quickly moved away from Weymouth, by train, to Lancashire, Cheshire and Yorkshire where accommodation could be provided. Miss Grace Fry recalled, "Soldiers began to push the children onto a train which started to move. One soldier grabbed my hand and said 'Can you run?' A steward appeared in at the open train door, the soldier pushed me into his arms, then off we went. We had no idea where we were going."[7] On 28 June, news that Germany had bombed Guernsey's habour reached England and no more ships were sent to collect evacuees. On 30 June, Guernsey was occupied by Germany and thousands of people's lives were changed forever.

20 June 2015 marks the 75th anniversary of the Guernsey Evacuation

https://guernseyevacuees.wordpress.com/evacuation/

Notes

[1] Second World War Experience Centre, Interview with Winifred Le Page (nee West), 2006.

[2] Testimony of Gavin Dorey, *The Evacuation*, Dorey family papers, 4.

[3] Interview with Hazel Hall, January 2010, 5.

[4] Guernsey Retired Teachers Association, Interview with Miss Grace Fry.

[5] Interview with Beryl Linehan (nee Merrien), May 2010, 2.

[6] Richard Allisette, *Islanders in Kitbags*, (Guernsey Press: Guernsey, 1985), foreward.

[7] Guernsey Retired Teachers Association, Interview with Miss Grace Fry.

It's only fair to share...

2 Responses to *The Arrival of Guernsey Evacuees in Weymouth, June 1940*

1. Elizabeth BassNovember 25, 2015 at 5:43 pm

   I may have corresponded with you before on this subject a few years ago, but I was interested in the mention of Grace Fry. My father's cousin, Constance Rees, also taught at Vauvert School and was involved in the evacuation exactly as you describe. Her daughter Janice (who died in 2009) left a school notebook describing her experiences – Connie(a widow) had three children and insisted they stay with her rather than go with their own school in Vale. They were on the Felixstowe, and after the delays and medical examination in Weymouth, they boarded a train which went via Abergavenny and Preston and eventually to Glasgow. Jan's account is very vivid (she was aged 11) and I have transcribed it and used it in connection with a book club reading of the Potato Peel Pie book – members said it brought the whole thing very close.

If you are interested in receiving a copy of the text I could send it. (Sorry if I have said this before – it's a few years ago and my memory is not what it was!)
Elizabeth Bass

- Gillian MawsonNovember 27, 2015 at 4:13 pm

  hi Elizabeth I would love a copy of Jan's account. However I just emailed you via the email address that showed up on the website and it bounced straight back. Pls can you send another comment with your email address again. thanks so much. Gill

The Port Towns and Urban Cultures group is dedicated to furthering our understanding of the social and cultural impact of life in port towns from the eighteenth century to the modern period. Find out more.

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The Arthur's Seat Coffins

ODDLY HISTORICAL



The Arthur's Seat Coffins By Kim Traynor - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0,

Arthur's Seat, a hill near the city of Edinburgh, Scotland, is a place that inspires mystery and wonder. Cited by legend as a potential site for Camelot, the hill has long had a place in local Scottish folklore, but perhaps the strangest story surrounding Arthur's Seat is very much rooted in reality.

In June of 1836, five local boys were hunting for rabbits when they stumbled across something bizarre hidden in a rocky recess in the northeast side of the hill—17 tiny coffins, containing carved figures dressed in customized clothing.

No one at the time—or since—knew what to make of the odd figurines. The Scotsman, reporting on the story soon after the discovery, postulated that the figures were used in some malevolent witchcraft ritual. The Edinburgh Evening Post took its own stab at an explanation, claiming that the dolls were laid to rest by a modern practioner of an ancient custom from Saxony of burying effigies of friends who had died in far off lands.

None of these explanations were quite satisfactory, though. In time, the figures were forgotten. Of the 17 initially discovered, only about 8 survived, the rest having been destroyed by the boys themselves. In 1901, these remaining eight were donated by a private collector to the Musuem of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, and then to the National Museums of Scotland. The conclusion these august institutions reached were in line with that of the Edinburgh Post—they were some sort of proxy burial. Who the effigies were meant to honor, no one knew.

While the mystery of why the coffins were made remained, in the 1990s more research into the dolls themselves shed more light on the circumstances of their creation. The figurines themselves were all created in the same style, probably by the same person, probably as a set. Their swinging arms, flat feet, and stiff bearing suggest they were originally crafted to be toy soldiers, while their open eyes suggest they were not intended to be corpses. This is further reinforced by the fact that some of the figures are missing their arms, which were in all probability removed so they could fit in the diminutive coffins. This led to the inference that the person who made the dolls and the person who made the coffins were two different people. The fabric the figures are clothed in is from the early 1830s, so they couldn't have been buried much more than six years before they were discovered.

None of this shed any light on exactly why the little bodies were laid to rest on Arthur's Seat. One more modern explanations is that the figures were tied to the infamous duo Burke and Hare, who killed 17 people in Edinburgh and sold the bodies to a medical school for dissection. The thinking goes that the figures were laid to rest in honor of those killed by the duo. The only real relation between the killings and the figures is the fact that they are close to one another chronologically—other than that, there is no relation between the two. In the end, two hundred years later, the

mystery of the Arthur's Seat is no closer to being solved.

Sources:

McLean, David. "Lost Edinburgh: The Arthur's Seat coffins." Scotsman.com. March 17, 2014. The Scotsman. March 28, 2016. http://www.scotsman.com/news/lost-edinburgh-the-arthur-s-seat-coffins-1-3342913

"The Mystery of the Miniature Coffins." Nms.ac.uk. The National Museum of Scotland. March 28, 2016. http://www.nms.ac.uk/explore/collections-stories/scottish-history-and-archaeology/mystery-of-the-miniature-coffins

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Man officials once thought to have been mauled, attacked by moose

4:29 PM June 10, 2016 ktva.com

http://www.ktva.com/man-officials-once-thought-to-have-been-mauled-attacked-by-moose-440/

ANCHORAGE –

Last updated at 4:44 p.m. on Monday, June 13

The man who was once thought to have been stabbed, then possibly attacked by a black bear, may have actually been attacked by a moose, according to the latest update from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. He has been identified as 50-year-old Fred Mayac, of Anchorage.

At 9:11 p.m. Wednesday, Mayac was discovered in a private driveway near Selkirk Drive, by Campbell Creek in the Jewell Lake area. He couldn't be interviewed because of the severity of his injuries, Fish and Game said. Mayac was hospitalized.

Staff at the hospital told police his wounds appeared to be more likely the result of a bear mauling than a stabbing, according to Fish and Game spokesman Ken Marsh.

After learning the attack was not caused by a human, police notified Fish and Game Thursday morning. The agency's investigation began in the Campbell Creek Estuary Natural Area. While biologists examined where the attack occurred, a person close by reported they'd just encountered a black bear that was not afraid of humans, Fish and Game wrote in a release.

A short time later, a black bear appeared near the scene of the attack.

"Concerned for public safety based on information suggesting a bear mauling had likely occurred, and because the bear showed no natural fear of humans and had appeared within close proximity of the attack scene, biologists made the decision to kill the animal," the release stated.

Biologists eventually returned to the scene of the attack and found tracks and hair that suggested a moose had actually been involved, Marsh said. There was no evidence a bear had been at the scene. Biologists have also learned Mayac's injuries were consistent of that of a moose attack.

"Conversations with Anchorage police later confirmed that a moose had been seen in the vicinity of the attack on the night the man was injured," Fish and Game wrote. "Officers said the animal had appeared agitated."

Fish and Game has also determined DNA testing is "not needed."

As of Monday evening, Mayac was still unable to speak with the Fish and Game investigators, according to Marsh.

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Mysterious Baby Star Throws a Tantrum... Alone

By Ian O'Neill, Discovery News | July 28, 2016 06:17pm ET

space.com



Mysterious Baby Star Throws a Tantrum... Alone

Credit: NASA/JPL-Caltech

A very young star has been discovered by itself, far from any star forming region. It is so isolated that astronomers are confounded as to how it came to be.

By collecting data from several observatories, researchers have realized that the star, called CX330, is going through an outburst. This energetic phase in the star's youth has heated the gas and dust surrounding it, making it glow in infrared radiation.

The fact that its outburst has been detected puts it in an already rare collection of stellar objects, but what makes CX330 unique is its apparent solitude. Frankly, the star shouldn't exist and in earlier observations it wasn't clear if it was even a star.

"We tried various interpretations for it, and the only one that makes sense is that this rapidly growing young star is forming in the middle of nowhere," said Chris Britt, of Texas Tech University in Lubbock, in a statement. Britt is lead author of a study focusing on CX330published in the Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society.

By comparing infrared observations by NASA's Wide-field Infrared Survey Explorer (WISE) and Spitzer Space Telescope, Britt's team found the star had increased in brightness 100-fold between 2007 and 2010. Only around a dozen stars exhibiting this type of rapid outburst have been recorded, but all were found in dense star-forming regions inhabited by other young stars. These stellar nurseries are hothouses for star formation.

But CX330 is 1,000 light-years from the nearest star forming region, leaving the researchers to speculate how it ended up by itself in an apparently empty void.

Could it be possible that the star was formed in a star formation region, only for it to be gravitationally slingshot out of the nest? This is highly unlikely as astronomers estimate the star is only a million years old and it is still consuming the gas and dust surrounding it. All lines of inquiry point to the fact the star was born where it is now and hasn't migrated far.

Another idea is that it might not be alone at all and it's with a group of other very faint stars, though there is no observational clues of their existence.

Regardless of its origins, we are very lucky to see the energetic outburst of a young star as this phase is predicted to last only a few years -- a fraction of a moment when considering the millions to billions of years life cycle of a star.

The last observations of CX330 were taken in 2015 and astronomers hope to check in with the baby star again soon to see whether it is still having a tantrum. By doing so, they hope to refine stellar evolution models. One model of star birth suggests singular stars can be born alone, far from the frenzied star nurseries where many stellar embryos compete for material to grow, sparked by turbulence in an interstellar cloud. If CX330 really is a stellar loner, it could be a unique example of this fascinating star formation model.

Source: NASA/JPL-Caltech

Originally published on Discovery News.

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Conservationists a-quivver as bats threaten site where Robin Hood fired his final arrow

telegraph.co.uk

http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/06/18/conservationists-a-quivver-as-bats-threaten-site-where-robin-hoo/

The Telegraph • David Barnett

18 June 2016 • 4:10pm

A scheme to urgently save a crumbling priory building from where the dying Robin Hood is said to have fired his final arrow could be scuppered by roosting bats.

An application has been submitted to Calderdale Council in Halifax, West Yorkshire, to rescue the Kirklees Priory gatehouse near Brighouse and transform it into a holiday home.

The derelict grade II* listed building has been on Historic England's "buildings at risk" register since 1999, and the public body has given a grant for the work to take place.

But Calderdale Council's own Countryside Services department said the application needs to be delayed or even retracted because the gatehouse could be home to two species of bats.

A spokesman said that following a survey of the site last October, "the presence of a small day roost of brown long-eared bats and a possible small day roost of a Myotis species is reported".

He added, "The proposals are likely to result in the loss of at least one bat roost and a bat licence is likely to be required. I recommend that this application be deferred or withdrawn pending the production of an updated bat report."

Kirklees Priory, built in the 13th Century, claims strong links to the legendary Robin Hood and his band of outlaws who waged guerrilla warfare on the tyrannical Prince John and the Sheriff of Nottingham.

The renowned archer, as he lay dying in the gatehouse, is said to have shot an arrow through the window and told his trusted lieutenant Little John that wherever it landed was to be his grave. Around 600 metres from the gatehouse is a headstone claimed to be that of Robin Hood.

Kirklees Priory is now a private estate which was bought by central heating and boiler magnate Louis Pickersgill in 2013. The gatehouse is one of several buildings on the site that Historic England considers to be "at risk":

Giles Proctor from Historic England said that ecological surveys would be done as part of the works they are part-funding and if there were any bat roosts they would be taken fully into account.

He said, "If anything was identified work would be timed to make allowance for roosting and to ensure they would not be disturbed."

According to Mr Proctor, the gatehouse is in "very poor" condition. He said, "It is built of stone with timber framing and the timber has suffered from a lot of decay. It is actually propped up by scaffolding.

“The site really is absolutely beautiful and when you are in the parkland you really don’t realise how close you are to some busy roads - it feels very secluded.”

There are around 245,000 brown long-eared bats in the UK, according to the Bat Conservation Trust. Bats of the Myotis genus are thought to be rarer, and include the pond bat, the notch-eared bat, and the greater mouse-eared bat, officially declared extinct in the UK in 1990 but which has since made a comeback.

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The king of conspiracy theorists

stuff.co.nz

stuff PETER MUNRO

Last updated 14:06, July 16 2016

The man described as the world's best-known conspiracy theorist is strangely mild-mannered. He has light blue eyes and a scruffy white mullet. He has a tendency to stare into the distance when talking, as if spotting some great unmentionables from afar.

David Icke, 64, sips weak tea while sitting in a hotel foyer near Sydney's Central Station, glancing at a television showing Maggie Beer baking what may or may not be a flan.

He believes terrorist attacks such as 9/11 are part of a global conspiracy to control the masses. He believes the moon is a hollowed-out alien space station. He believes 60 per cent of the world's leaders, notably Queen Elizabeth II, are shape-shifting humanoid reptiles.



Nic Walker/Fairfax David Icke in Australia in July.



Nic Walker/Fairfax David Icke in the late 60s.

Is Australian PM Malcolm Turnbull a reptile, I ask him. "Possibly," he says. Bill Shorten? He thinks for a moment. "Yeah, it's possible."

Icke (pronounced "eye-k") estimates that up to 5 per cent of the population are lizards – which equates to about 1,206,473 people in Australia.

An equally surprising score have paid up to $140 each to attend Icke's Worldwide Wake Up Tour here. Tickets to his first Australian talk, in Perth, sold out. His Saturday night show at Sydney Town Hall was almost filled by Friday, with more than 1100 tickets sold.

What's driving them are the same sorts of forces that gave the world Brexit, Donald Trump and Pauline Hanson, Icke suggests.

He rails against political correctness and reptilian overlords like they're part of the same problem. "People are sick and tired of the political class," he says. "People now in ever greater numbers are starting to re-evaluate the world and their perception of life."

The former British football player, BBC presenter and Greens spokesman sees the world as a great big spider web of Satanic rituals, mind control and skulduggery.

He reckons authorities manufacture terrorist attacks to introduce greater surveillance. He calls this strategy "problem-reaction-solution". "It used to be called the 'Hegelian dialectic' but I thought that was too many syllables," he says.

We spoke on Wednesday, before a man drove a truck into a crowd of people in Nice. I ask Icke whether his conspiracy theories might offend the families of terrorist victims. "Why would anyone be offended by seeking the



Nic Walker/Fairfax David Icke in the 70s, running as a Green candidate.

truth of what happened to their loved ones," he says.

The conversation turns to lizards, as does every one of Icke's interviews. I ask him how to spot a humanoid reptile and he tells me to look closely. "When I look into the Queen's eyes I don't see human eyes," he says.

He claims there are many accounts through history of someone's eyes becoming slits, their height growing by about 60 centimetres and their skin turning scaly.

Do they still have legs, I ask. "They're humanoids, they're not like lizard lizards," he says.

He is often accused of anti-Semitic undertones, such that when he complains the world is run by big green lizards, he actually means it's run by Jews. But my impression is that when he says lizards, he means lizards.

And he's not afraid to say it.

"The mainstream media is judging the world from the perspective of the 'postage-stamp normal', so whoever is outside the postage stamp is either mad or crazy or dangerous," he says.

"You've got to not care what people think of you or you're never going to put it out there. I'm interested in the truth, not a statue or a round of applause."

- Sydney Morning Herald

Emailnewstips@stuff.co.nz

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Echoes of the past: Bethnal Green Tube Station

wordpress.com

https://hauntedpalaceblog.wordpress.com/2016/04/16/echoes-of-the-past-bethnal-green-tube-station/

The Haunted Palace

Echoes of the past: Bethnal Green Tube Station

16 *Saturday* Apr 2016

Posted by Miss_Jessel

The Spirits of the Underground



La-historia-oculta-del-metro-de-Londres-610x250

The lawn

Is pressed by unseen feet and ghosts return
Gently at twilight, gently go at dawn
The sad intangible who grieve and yearn

T.S. Eliot

It is often said of London that it is the most haunted city on earth and nearly every place in the city seems to have its own ghost story. At night when you wander around the streets of London with the buildings both old and new towering over you and the shadowy dark narrow alleyways it is not surprising that the mind can sometimes play tricks. It is not only the places above ground which have become the haunts of the spirit world but also the world underneath. Throughout the maze of tunnels and stations which have witnessed countless murders, suicides and fatal accidents many have claimed to have seen something that they could not rationally explain.



houses-of-parliament-and-london-eye-on-thames-from-above-640_visitlondoncom_1

The ghost of a faceless woman has been seen walking behind people in the tunnels at Hyde Park Corner; at Farringdon Underground Station people have seen the spirit of Anne Naylor (also known as the 'Screaming Spectre') a 13 year old girl whose murdered remains were dumped on the site in 1758[1]; the spirit of the actor William Terris who was stabbed in December 1897 in the Strand and who used to visit a bakery on the site which is now Convent Gardens Station has been often seen dressed in his frock coat and hat walking on the platform; the Black Nun of Threadneedle Street, Sarah Whitehead has been seen at Bank Station and the transparent form of a woman was watched stroking the hair of an electrician in Aldgate Station shortly before he received a 20,000 volt electric shock from which he emerged pretty much unscathed[2].



bg_shortlistcom_bw

At Bethnal Green Tube Station at night tube workers and users have claimed they have heard the screams and cries of terrified souls in fear and anguish. A famous story recounts how a man working late at the station had just watched the last tube leave, turned off the station lights and headed back to his office to finish off his reports when he heard the sounds of children sobbing. The sobbing grew louder and louder and was joined by women's voices screaming in panic and other noises which he could not identify. The whole episode lasted between ten to fifteen minutes. Terrified he ran out of his office and headed for the exit[3]. It is believed that he had heard the ghostly replay of the last few minutes of life of over a hundred people who suffocated to death at the station on the 3 March 1943.

A Campaign of Terror


A back-garden with Anderson shelters. The stairs at Bethnal Green Tube station The official enquiry Safety measures being put in place, after the disaster. War Cabinet report Memorial to the Bethnal Green disaster, Stairway to Heaven.

The term 'the Blitz' was given by the British Press to Hitler's bombing campaign between 7 September 1940 and 10 May 1941 which aimed at demoralising the people of the United Kingdom during the Second World War. Although it actually refers to the UK wide bombing of cities such as Glasgow, Belfast, Portsmouth, Swansea, Hull, Bristol Sheffield, Liverpool etc. all of which suffered horrendous damage and loss of life it is images of London (out of the 43000 civilians killed during this period over a half were in London as well as one million houses destroyed) and in particular the devastation to the East End which has become synonymous with the Blitz!


A back-garden with Anderson shelters. The stairs at Bethnal Green Tube station The official enquiry Safety measures being put in place, after the disaster. War Cabinet report Memorial to the Bethnal Green disaster, Stairway to Heaven.

A Personal Connection



A back-garden with Anderson shelters. The stairs at Bethnal Green Tube station The official enquiry Safety measures being put in place, after the disaster. War Cabinet report Memorial to the Bethnal Green disaster, Stairway to Heaven.

For me the Bethnal Green Tube disaster has a more personal connection. My mother's family came from the East End and my grandmother and her two sisters remembered growing up and living in the area with deep affection. Living close to Bethnal Green Tube Station they often used it as a place of safety during the worst of the bombing. Night after night during the Blitz my family would make their way to a shelter to wait for the all clear signal. One day when the expected warning siren went off, my grandmother along with her sisters and mother started to make their way to the shelter only to have one of my great aunts change her mind and refuse to leave. Tired of spending her nights in the unpleasant conditions of the shelter she decided to take her chance and remain above ground. My great grandmother frightened for her daughter's safety sent my grandmother up to their bedroom to reason with her. Eventually after a lot of arguing my great aunt was finally persuaded to leave and relieved, they all made their way to the shelter. When they returned the next day their house was

gone.



A back-garden with Anderson shelters. The stairs at Bethnal Green Tube station The official enquiry Safety measures being put in place, after the disaster. War Cabinet report Memorial to the Bethnal Green disaster, Stairway to Heaven.

The bomb had gone straight through the centre of my great aunt's bedroom, the room that she had been stubbornly sitting in only a few hours ago. My family lost most of their possessions including all our photographs but at least they were all alive, it could have been so much worse. Bombed out they were relocated to Epping which at the time was just a tiny rural village with very few amenities. Nowadays people would think it quaint and charming but for my family born in the vibrant, busy and crowded East End it was like being exiled to the wilderness of outer Mongolia. For them as for countless others Bethnal Green Station was a life saver but on one terrible occasion it became a death trap!

A Place of Safety

For some unknown reason one of the most important policy makers for the home front during the war Sir John Anderson seems to have developed a deep aversion to the use of tube stations as shelters despite them having played an invaluable role in the First World War. Maybe he had a bad experience, maybe he had a phobia of being so far underground or maybe he was just concerned at the danger of having such large numbers of people concentrated in so few places. Whatever the reason his policies eschewed the use of the tubes in favour of smaller shelters dispersed around the city.



A back-garden with Anderson shelters.

In January 1924, Anderson then chairman of the Air Raid Precautions Committee of Imperial Defence ruled out the use of tube stations in all future conflicts and on the 20 April 1939 Anderson now Lord Privy Secretary in his report on war shelters refused to reconsider his earlier position. His arguments included the risk of the spread of diseases due to the lack of toilet facilities; the possibility of injury or death from people falling on to the lines and; most bizarrely of all that people would develop a 'deep shelter mentality' and feel so safe they would never want to leave (according to my great aunts that was never a realistic concern)[4].



*INF3-294_Road_safety_Look_out_in_the_until_your_eyes_get_used_to_the_*

At first the Government's position was workable as the light bombings during the summer of 1940 meant that the public shelters were not heavily used but as the bombing intensified general opinion began to turn. Ignoring growing public unrest Anderson (now promoted to Minister of Home Security) dug his heels in and issued a joint report with the Ministry of Transport on the 17 September 1940 to warn people not to use the tubes as shelters except in emergencies. Despite all the policies, warnings and reports people used their own judgement and ignored them. Over the night of the 19/20 September determined Londoners took the matter into their own hands and from 4pm onwards hundreds of people in an act of mass disobedience grabbed their bedding and food and flocked down into the tube stations. Faced with a civilian rebellion on such a massive scale, the Government finally caved in and formulated a 'deep shelter extension

policy'[5]. The policy included converting 79 stations including Bethnal Green Tube Station into suitable accommodation with bunks fitted to accommodate about 22000 people, first aid facilities, chemical toilets, 124 canteens and the recruitment of Shelter Marshals as well as reinforcing the underground flood walls.



A back-garden with Anderson shelters. The stairs at Bethnal Green Tube station The official enquiry Safety measures being put in place, after the disaster. War Cabinet report Memorial to the Bethnal Green disaster, Stairway to Heaven.

20:27 – The 3 March 1943

Although the Blitz was considered over by the beginning of May 1941 London still suffered from intermittent raids. To the amazement of the Government Londoners were well informed about British war strategy paying particular attention to the RAF bombing campaigns which would mean German retaliation.

On the evening of the 3 March 1943 Londoners calmly got ready to spend another night in the shelters. Many had the procedure down to a fine art, sending a member of the family down to a 'bundle shop' i.e. left luggage store to collect bedding to be taken down to the shelter whilst other members grabbed food and gathered up the children.



A back-garden with Anderson shelters. The stairs at Bethnal Green Tube station The official enquiry Safety measures being put in place, after the disaster. War Cabinet report Memorial to the Bethnal Green disaster, Stairway to Heaven.

Bethnal Green Tube Station had been fitted out in the same style as the other station. To enter the station you would first go down 19 steps to a landing and then another seven to the ticket hall. From there you would take one of the escalators 80 feet down to the platform. There was room for about 7000 people with bunks for 5000 and the remainder having to find a space where they could. In addition the Metropolitan Borough of Bethnal Green responsible for the running of the shelter had even built a hospital and a library.

The siren went off at 20:17 in the evening and people started to make their way through the darkness which was described as like "*running through ink*"[6] to the station. At first everything was pretty much normal at Bethnal Green Tube Station. People started to walk calmly down the 19 steps to the landing taking care as it had been raining and the steps were slippery. Suddenly ten minutes later everyone heard a loud noise which was unlike anything they had ever heard before. Startled and confused a woman with a small child at the bottom of the steps fell. An elderly man behind her lost his balance and fell on top of the woman. This started a horrifying and unstoppable domino effect with people piling on top of each other. Those entering the station were unable to see what had happened at the bottom and continued to push forward making a bad situation even worse as people were lifted off their feet and carried downstairs by the force of the crowd behind. The whole episode lasted only 15 seconds at the end of which all anyone could see was a huge pile of bodies, ten deep, arms and legs entangled with those at the bottom crushed to death "*The stairway was converted from a corridor to a charnel house in 10 to 15 seconds*"[7]. The people already settled in the shelter were completely unaware of the tragedy which was unfolding above them.

A Terrible Sight

PC Thomas Penn who was bringing his wife to the shelter luckily arrived too late to be caught up in it but tried to assess the damage. He crawled down over the bodies finding 200 people at the bottom trapped in a small



The stairs at Bethnal Green Tube station

space. He then crawled back out to send a message for help and crawled back down to try to help those trapped. He fainted twice.

People arriving at the scene joined in the rescue attempt. The injured were taken to hospital whilst the bodies were laid out on the pavements. The dead were later taken to the local mortuary at Whitechapel hospital and when that become overcrowded were brought over the road to St John's Church. The police surgeon told the coroner that he had been amazed that of the 300 people involved not one was found with fractured ribs.

It took a while for the scale of what had happened to sink in. 62 people had been injured; 173 had been killed, 27 men, 84 women and 62 (one casualty died later in hospital from injuries sustained during the crush). The woman who had been at the front of the group survived but her child did not. The youngest to be killed was Carol Geary she was only five months old. The loss of life was horrendous and not a single bomb had been dropped.

The disaster affected everyone involved; those who had been trapped, the rescuers and of course the families who lost their loved ones. For many what they had gone through, seen or heard haunted them and left scars that never healed. One survivor's daughter recounted how her mother once told her that *"every night of her life when she laid down to sleep she heard the cries and screams of everybody"*[8].

A Government Whitewash

The news about the disaster at Bethnal Green began to circulate but fearful of the outcome of any investigation and worried how it will affect public morale, government officials decided that the best course of action would be pretty much to hush it up. The press were censored and not allowed to report on the incident for two days and even when they were finally free to print their articles they were forbidden to reveal the actual location of the disaster. Despite trying to brush it under the carpet somehow the Nazis heard about Bethnal Green and decided to use it for their own propaganda purposes claiming that it had been their bombs which had been responsible for the deaths.



The official enquiry

Initially the idea of an investigation was dismissed as being unnecessary with officials agreeing with Sir Laurence Rivers Dunne that it *"would give the incident a disproportionate importance and might encourage the enemy to make further nuisance raids"*[9]. Eventually a short statement was read out in the House of Commons which simply stated that precautions would be taken in the future to prevent anything like it happening again.

Falling on Death Ears

In his book Rick Fountain presents damning evidence against the Government and their policy towards Bethnal Green Tube Station. He discovered letters from Bethnal Green Council to the Local Civil Defence sector of the Government sent shortly before the disaster. These letters shed new light of what was happening behind the scenes. In one letter the council asked the Government to approve plans to alter the entrance to the tube station to make it safer to avoid a bottleneck. The request was refused. Two more letters were written by the Borough Engineer to the Government asking them to approve changes to the station's entrance and also the staircase including the erection of crash barrier to slow down the movement of the crowds. Both times the Government said no and that a crash barrier was a waste of money.

The day after the disaster, all the changes were implemented.

The letters were hidden under the Official Secrets Act.

The Government placed all the blame on the Council.



Safety measures being put in place, after the disaster.

A Lucky Escape

So what about the strange noise that had startled everyone in the shelter? Most agree now that the sound was the firing of 60 rockets from an anti-aircraft battery gun by the Royal Artillery in Victoria Park. It was a new defence weapon which had never been heard before and should never have been tested in a built up area. One eyewitness, Babette Clarke had missed her bus and so narrowly avoided being inside the shelter, she said *"As they went up they whistled like the bombs did as they came down and that's what caused the pushing because people thought it was bombs coming down"*[10].



Hyde_Park_Anti-aircraft_guns_H_993

A Sort of Justice

It was only at the end of the war that the Government faced by mounting public pressure finally agreed to answer questions about what actually happened that night. The Minister of Home Security Herbert Morrison quoted from a secret report – so an investigation had been carried out. Maybe the Government was worried that one day they would be held accountable. The report cited inadequate lighting (the stairway was only lit by one 25 watt bulb), shortage of supervisors and lack of handrails as being contributory factors but stated that it was the *"irrational behaviour of the crowd*[11]*"* which was most to blame. He stated that the report was originally suppressed as they had been worried that no one would believe the findings.



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Printed for the War Cabinet. April 1943.

189

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It is requested that special care may be taken to ensure the secrecy of this document.

WAR CABINET.

TUBE SHELTER INQUIRY.

REPORT BY Mr. MORRISON.

MEMORANDUM BY THE HOME SECRETARY AND MINISTER OF HOME SECURITY

War Cabinet report

Not everyone agreed with the report's conclusions. The Shoreditch Coroner Mr W.R.H. Heddy along with other officials stated that testimonies given from witnesses confirm that whilst people were *"anxious and hurrying"* there was *"nothing to suggest any stampede or panic or anything of the kind"*[12]. The decision to hold the inquiry in secret was also condemned. For me personally it makes a lot of sense. My grandmother and great aunts often told stories about having to find shelter quickly wherever they were when the sirens went off and the impression I got from them was that it was another part of their lives at the time. Although annoying and unpleasant and at times inconvenient, it was what you had to do and you just did it.

I also feel that blaming the shelter wardens for not being on the scene quickly enough to stop it happening was really unfair. They were doing a difficult job in dreadful circumstances. They were also really short of manpower since everyone who was fit was being called up for military service. Accusing these men who (along with so many others) put their lives at risk on a daily basis of being responsible for such a terrible tragedy was in my opinion a travesty of injustice.

A number of lawsuits were made looking for compensation including the well-documented 'Baker v Bethnal Green Corporation' brought by a bereaved widow. The decision was made in her favour. A number of similar cases followed. By the beginning of 1950s over £60000 had been paid out.

Finally a Fitting Tribute

If you are going down the steps to Bethnal Green tube station from the south east entrance you will probably not notice a small plaque attached to the overhang above the step where the first woman fell. It is easy to miss and during the weekly rush hour thousands of people pass under it never giving it a second thought. If you do pause for a moment and look you will read the dedication:-



358704220_24af1c055f_eastlondonlinescouk

It is hard to comprehend that such a small memorial could be sufficient to remember an event of such magnitude and loss for the tight knit Bethnal Green community and that it was only in 2013, on the 70th anniversary of the disaster that finally the names of those killed were officially recognised. Up until then the memorial service which is held annually at St John's Church was always taken up with reading out a list of the names. In recent years some amazing people have wanted to change this. In 2007 'The Stairway to Heaven Memorial Trust' (a link to their website can be found below) was established to raise money for the installation of a much more fitting tribute to commemorate the disaster. Designed by local architects Harry Patticas and Jens Borstlemann the memorial bronze staircase will contain 173 points of light, one for each of the victims.

Afterthought

Why has it taken so long to be acknowledged? It seems to me that it was simply guilt and embarrassment on the part of the Government. In October 1940 Winston Churchill broadcasted on radio this uplifting message *"He [Hitler] hopes, by killing large numbers of civilians, and woman and children, that he will terrorize and cow the people of the mighty imperial city…Little does he know the spirit of the British nation, or the tough fibre of the Londoners"*[13]. It must have been tough to have to admit after praising the fortitude and courage of Londoners that it was in fact the British Government's lack of concern for their safety and refusal to take simple measures to protect them that had resulted in an incident which saw the biggest single loss of civilians in the UK in the Second World War.

All I know is that I owe a debt to Bethnal Green Tube Station which protected my family through one of the worst periods in London History but also ironically I owe some thanks to that bomb which destroyed their home but meant that my family was not in that shelter on that fateful day.


Memorial to the Bethnal Green disaster, Stairway to Heaven.

Notes

[1] Anne Naylor's Ghost: http://seeksghosts.blogspot.co.uk/2013/03/anne-naylors-ghost.html

[2] Ghosts of the London Underground: http://www.unexplained-mysteries.com/column.php?id=135129

[3] Bethnal Green Tube Station: http://www.hauntedrooms.co.uk/product/bethnal-green-underground-tube-station-london

[4] Air raid shelters: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Air-raid_shelter#Underground_.28tube.29_stations

[5] ibid

[6] Stairway to Heaven Memorial Trust: http://www.stairwaytoheavenmemorial.org/

[7] East end memorials: http://eastend-memories.org/the_bethnal_green_underground_disaster/bethnal_green_underground_disaster.html

[8] Woman Campaigns for Tube memorial: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/mobile/england/london/7905147.stm

[9] The Bethnal Green Tube Shelter Disaster: http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/09/a795909.shtml

[10] Bethnal Green Tube disaster marked 70 years on: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-21645163

[11] East end memorials: http://eastend-memories.org/the_bethnal_green_underground_disaster/bethnal_green_underground_disaster.html

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[13] Every man to his post 1940: https://www.nationalchurchillmuseum.org/every-man-to-his-post.html

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Image credits are shown in the alt text of each image.

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World War II Bethnal Green Tube disaster 'avoidable': http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-17250158

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East end memorials: http://eastend-memories.org/the_bethnal_green_underground_disaster/bethnal_green_underground_disaster.html

The Bethnal Green Tube tragedy saw 173 people crushed to death – making it the war's worst civilian disaster. But why was it censored from history?: http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-521490/The-Bethnal-Green-Tube-tragedy-saw-173-people-crushed-death–making-wars-worst-civilian-disaster-But-censored-history.html

History house – Britain's greatest wartime civilian tragedy: http://www.historyhouse.co.uk/articles/bethnal_green_disaster.html

Bethnal Green Underground Tube Station, London: http://www.hauntedrooms.co.uk/product/bethnal-green-underground-tube-station-london

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Rick Fountain: Mr Morrison's Conjuring Trick: The People of Bethnal Green (deceased) v The Crown Paperback, 2012

thoughts on "Echoes of the past: Bethnal Green Tube Station"

1. P.E. Cor*said:*

May 20, 2016 at 10:12 am

A fascinating piece of history but what a horrible tragedy! Thanks for the post.

2. Miss_Jessel*said:*

May 20, 2016 at 7:10 pm

Thank you for the comment. Yes it is an extremely sad piece of London's history. It is a shame it has been nearly forgotten.

Blog at WordPress.com. The Chateau Theme .

Fantasia Film Festival Review – Beware the Slenderman.

Posted by kimnewman johnnyalucard.com

· 19 July, 2016 · Leave a comment



beware the slenderman

My notes on the HBO documentary Beware the Slenderman, which screened at the Fantasia Film Festival.

In 2014, three twelve-year-old girls went out for a day trip into woods near Waukesha, Wisconsin. At the end of a game of hide and seek, Morgan Geyser – with at least the connivance and at worst encouragement of Anissa Weier – stabbed the third girl, Payton 'Bella' Leutner, nineteen times. Not only did Morgan and Anissa leave their friend to die, they told her to stay still while they went to fetch help and then did something else … haring off on a quest to find the mansion of an internet bogeyman. Bella managed to crawl to a road and was saved. Her two friends – Morgan was her longtime best friend, though Anissa was a newer acquaintance – were picked up by the police and calmly, in fact numbly, owned up to what had happened. Despite the fact that the connection hogged the headlines, there's a crucial vagueness about the way the crime relates to Slenderman. At times, the girls seem to believe murder was to be an entrée into the Slender Mansion where they would be elevated …at others, it's suggested Morgan felt she had to kill her friend or else she and her family would be punished.

This documentary feature by Irene Taylor Brodsky picks up on a story which was well-reported and comes at it from several angles. She uses footage of interviewes with the young arrestees and their court appearances – forced to focus on the backs of their heads or their shackled feet because the judge ruled their faces not be filmed until he'd passed a ruling on whether they should be tried as adults or in the juvenile system – to drive a true crime narrative. Initially, the film sketches in the background of the Slenderman modern legend and the growth of internet memes as urban myths, relating the character to the Pied Piper (cue extracts from a creepy Czech cartoon). One of the kids draws Slenderman alongside Jack Skellington from The Nightmare Before Christmas, but that's the only nod to more recent pop culture bogeymen like Freddy Krueger or Candyman (and such Slenderman lookalikes as the Babadook and the Silence from Doctor Who). There's doubtless a film to be made about the rise of exquisite corpse myth figures on sites like Creepypasta, where cryptoparanormal research overlaps with fan fiction (including art and animations) in a crowdsourced internet equivalent of the create-a-ghost experiment. Beware the Slenderman eventually skitters away from that and focuses on the crime in hand. It doesn't namecheck Constance Kent, Mary Bell, the Heavenly Creatures case or the murderers of Jamie Bulger, but it's plain Morgan and Anissa are in the line of descent from these killer children – their victim only survived through luck.

Interviews with the families of the accused (though not the victim) show adults struggling to come to terms with their kids' actions: Anissa's father worries about the prevalence of i-Pads in school while Morgan's parents face her diagnosis of schizophrenia (which the girl might have inherited from her father). Because the case is ongoing, Brodsky can't speculate about what really happened or why. Between the lines, the relationship between the three girls seems much more complicated than anyone cares to admit and there's a sense (as with Heavenly Creatures) of an ultimately dangerous mix of the different character traits of Morgan and Anissa which lead to violence. There's a seam

throughout of grown-ups who don't get the kids' references – not knowing who Snape is, for instance, or ever asking whether Payton named herself Bella after the heroine of Twilight – and a dark look at a side of fandom whereby Morgan appears to identify with Mr Spock because his Vulcan lack of emotion might well be analogous to her incipient mental disorder.

A chilly coda, which takes a while to sink in, looks at Slenderman/Morgan/Anissa fan-art, animations and tribute pages. If anyone I loved was victim of an assault and the perps' fans made a cute cartoon of the crime I imagine I'd want to turn vigilante. This comes after the film has got away from Slenderman to wrestle with hard-to-gauge truths of the matter, only for the amorphous mememaking corners of the internet to surge up again unhelpfully.

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By Dana Matthews on 07/28/2016 weekinweird.com



Week In Weird

Home / Ghosts & Hauntings / Beware the Widow Ghosts: Look Out Black Eyed Kids, There's A New Paranormal Nightmare in Town



halloween-1016188_960_720

Unless you've been living under a rock, there's a fairly good chance you're already familiar with the internet's recent obsession with Black-Eyed Kids, Hat Men, and Shadow Person experiences, but there's another terrifying paranormal nightmare that you might not be familiar with, and it makes the others look like Casper. Beware the Widow Ghosts.

Though we might not have ever heard of Widow Ghosts, stories of their hauntings have been famous in Thailand for, well… ever. Directly associated with Nightmare Death Syndrome or **Sudden Unexpected Death Syndrome**, many believe that the appearance of a Widow Ghost is not only paranormal, but deadly.

> "Sudden unexpected death syndrome is sudden unexpected death of adolescents and adults, many during sleep. This syndrome occurs in populations that are culturally and genetically distinct and people who leave the population carry with them the vulnerability to sudden death during sleep."



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The description of a Widow Ghost is that of a human female spirit that roams the night, killing men to take their souls as husbands in the otherworld. The phantoms are often associated with women who were "sexually promiscuous" in life, and who are looking to seek revenge on the men who treated them badly while they were alive.

Widow Ghosts became a real fear in the 90s, causing quite a few terrified dudes to dress up in drag while they slept, thinking that by tossing on some lipstick and rouge, they might ward off the bloodthirsty spirits. Unfortunately, that technique isn't said to work very well. According to those who have avoided the murderous Widow Ghosts, the only thing that will ward off the deadly phantoms is wearing a small wooden penis. For real.

Over the years, a good number of first-hand accounts of entities obsessed with tormenting men have cropped up around the world, so maybe it's not so hard to believe in the phenomenon of Widow Ghosts. They may very well be the next Black-Eyed Kids.

Have you ever experienced a run-in with a Widow Ghost? Let us know in the comments below. Looking for even more weird news? Follow us on Twitter at @WeirdHQ or like us on Facebook.

Dana Matthews

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Big Foot on Mars: Alien hunters make shock claim of Yeti skull found on Red Planet

express.co.uk

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Big Foot on Mars: Alien hunters make shock claim of Yeti skull found on Red Planet

WHEN it comes to objects allegedly found on Mars in NASA images you may have thought you had heard it all by now.

By Jon Austin Jon Austin
PUBLISHED:17:52, Thu, Jun 9, 2016 | UPDATED: 20:48, Thu, Jun 9, 2016



PARANORMALCRUCIBLE•NASA•YouTube

Big Foot? It is one of the wilder theories to come out of alien chasers' minds.

But now so-called paranormal investigators claim to have found a head resembling that of a bizarre alien or even the fabled Big Foot from Earth laying on the Martian surface.

Just days after a man alleged to have found a fossilised Big Foot head in Utah, claims have surfed online of the same relic spotted in images beamed back to Earth by NASA's Curiosity Rover 4WD space probe.

It is currently exploring the barren planet's surface.

YouTube channel Paranormal Crucible, which is often accused of "misinterpreting objects" in NASA images after editing them with so-called colourisation techniques, has released a video entitled "Alien or Sasquatch Skull Found On Mars".

Interestingly, the myth of the Sasquatch, another name for the American Big Foot, has been tied in with UFOs many times by alien believers.

One crazy theory claims that UFOs are often seen before Big Foot sightings, and that the legendary monster primate may even be an alien brought to Earth on UFOs to gather samples, before being whisked off back to another part of the galaxy.

A blurb for the video released this week said: "Strange artefact found by the rover, appears to resemble a large skull, obviously alien in nature, could it be the remains of a Sasquatch or a bizarre Martian creature?"

The object (ringed) in the original NASA picture.

And in close up before processing by the YouTube channel.



PARANORMALCRUCIBLE•YouTube



PARANORMALCRUCIBLE•YouTube

Strange artefact found by the rover, appears to resemble a large skull, obviously alien in nature, could it be the remains of a Sasquatch or a bizarre Martian creature?

Paranormal Crucible

The video then zooms in on an object that is slightly off colour to the rest of the yellowish scene.

It then highlights it with lighter colours to try to sharpen the image, a technique critics of the channel say is misrepresentation.

Some viewers of the video believed it looked more like a helmet or head of a statue from from an ancient civilisation than a skull.

One user posted: "It looks more like the head of a statue, rather than a skull. It reminds me of those old Greek style bronze statues where the eyes are hollow."

5 Comments
1 day ago
D.Lucas
Anyone else experiencing FF crashes? Latest version, fl@sh up to date...only ever happens here.
Previous comment moderated...
1 day ago
Bassil brush
ONE OBJECT IN ONE MARS PHOTO, A CYLINDER WITH A INLET AND AN OUTLET IT IS A WATER FILTER. NOW WHY WOULD ANYONE WANT A WATER FILTER ON MARS WHERE THERE IS NO WATER HA HA HA GULLIBLE IDIOTS WHO CALL THEMSELVES HUMAN BEINGS
1 day ago
Bassil brush

YOU KNOW WHAT FOLKS, I HAVE 49 VIDEOS ON YOUTUBE THAT PROVES BEYOND DOUBT THAT AMERICA NEVER WENT TO THE MOON, IT WAS ALL FAKED, I ALSO HAVE A VIDEO PROVING THAT EVERY MARS PHOTO IS FAKE AND SO IS THE MARS ROVER CURIOSITY. NOW ARE ANY OF YOU AWARE THAT JUST ABOUT EVERY MARS PHOTO DISPLAYS OBJECTS SUCH AS THE ONE HERE, OBJECTS DELIBERATELY INSERTED TO FOOL YOU.

2 days ago
Gordon Bennett

It's really not that surprising when you know where those photos were really taken.
3 days ago
greenwashing

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Filmmaker Says Bigfoot 'Ruined' His Life

huffingtonpost.com

"I know it wasn't a man in a suit. It couldn't have been!"

07/07/2016 07:40 pm ET

- David MoyeReporter, The Huffington Post

The man who shot a Bigfoot video that many believe is the most compelling proof of the creature's existence says the experience "ruined" him.

Bob Gimlin shot the controversial film footage with Roger Patterson near Bluff Creek in Northern California in the fall of 1967.

Nearly 50 years later, he tells Outside magazine that he wishes he'd never left his home in Oregon to go searching for Bigfoot with Patterson.

The Patterson-Gimlin film, as it is called, depicts a tall hairy animal reportedly 7 feet high walking near the creek, away from the two men and briefly glancing over its shoulder to look at them.

The film, less than a minute, caused years of grief for Gimlin, who felt Patterson edged him out of the three-way deal they shared with Patterson's brother-in-law to exploit the film.

Gimlin also had to deal with ridicule from his friends and neighbors in Yakima, Washington.

"They'd come driving in my driveway all times of the night and go 'Bob! We want to go out Bigfoot hunting!'" he told Outside magazine.

Gimlin was torn: If he acknowledged he believed in Bigfoot, he was the town loon while people assumed he was lying if he stayed quiet.

"I can understand why they don't believe in it — because I didn't believe it either," Gimlin recalls telling one interviewer. "But I saw one. And I know what I saw. And I know it wasn't a man in a suit. It couldn't have been!"

Although many researchers believe the creature in the film is just a man in an animal suit, the Patterson-Gimlin film has never been completely debunked, according to Animal Planet star Matt Moneymaker, founder and president of the Bigfoot Field Researchers Organization (BFRO).

"Contrary to what many people assumed, the footage has never been proved to be a hoax," Moneymaker told HuffPost in 2012. "And every scientific examination and analysis of the footage has either fallen into the category of inconclusive or demonstrating something that can't be explained by 1967 technology.

"Many imposters have claimed to be the man in the costume and all of them have been debunked by people who were there," he added.

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The Bloody Code and the Black Nun of Threadneedle Street

wordpress.com

https://hauntedpalaceblog.wordpress.com/2015/12/08/the-bloody-code-and-the-black-nun-of-threadneedle-street/

The Haunted Palace

08 *Tuesday* Dec 2015

Posted by Miss_Jessel

Tags

ann hurle, black nun, bloody code, capital punishment, crime and punishment, eighteenth century, forgery, ghost of the bank of england, Ghosts, hanging in England, historical crimes, nineteenth century, philip whitehead, sarah whitehead, the black nun, thomas maynard, threadneedle street, william dodd

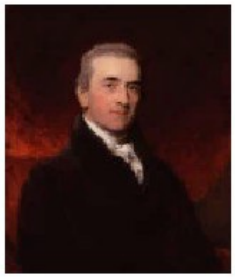
"Criminals do not die by the hands of the law. They die by the hands of other men." — *George Bernard Shaw, Man and Superman*



Engraving by William Heath (1794–1840). Image via Durham University 4schools.

Death as a form of punishment has been around for as long as people have existed although the form it has taken has varied with hung, drawn and quartered; boiling in oil; burning at the stake; beheading with a sword and hanging varying in popularity at different times. Hanging for crimes was first introduced by the Anglo-Germanic tribes in the 5th century but was abolished during the reign of William the Conqueror's and replaced with the more 'humane' punishment of castration and blinding for all but the crime of poaching royal deer. Hanging was reintroduced by Henry I and in the 18th century was the '*principle punishment for capital offenses*'[1]. Beheading (last used in 1747 in the execution of Simon Fraser, Lord Lovat) was only used for those from the high born classes whilst women found guilty of counterfeiting or murdering their husbands were burnt (witches in England were hung rather than burnt as in Scotland). Burning at the stake was abolished in England in 1790[2]. Public executions were ended in 1868 with the curtain finally falling on capital punishment in the United Kingdom in 1969.

The Bloody Code



Sir Samuel Romilly, legal reformer. By Sir Thomas Lawrence via Wikimedia.

"[There is] no country on the face of the earth in which there [have] been so many different offences according to the law to be punished with death as in England" — *Sir Samuel Romilly*

In 1688, there were 50 crimes punishable by death in English law, in 1765 this number had risen to 160 and astonishingly in 1815 this figure had reached more than 220. The reason for this was a new penal code introduced in 1791 which turned most minor misdemeanors into capital offences. This code became known by the grim nickname of '*The Bloody Code*' and between its introduction and abolition in 1822 more than 10,000 men, women and children were sentenced to death[3]. The implementation of the code reveals a deep anxiety in the minds of the wealthy and powerful classes to any threat to their possessions, rights or properties. This anxiety was intensified by the events of the French Revolution which saw the accepted social order turned on its head.

Amongst the usual offences such as arson, murder, piracy, rape and treason were a number which would seem extremely peculiar to us today.

- Begging in the company of gipsies for a month

- Malicious maiming of cattle
- Damaging Westminster Bridge
- Impersonating a Chelsea Pensioner
- Strong evidence of malice in children seven to fourteen years old
- Stealing from a shipwreck
- General poaching
- Begging without a licence if you are a soldier or sailor
- Writing a threatening letter
- Destroying turnpike roads
- Stealing from a rabbit warren
- Pick pocketing goods worth more than one shilling
- Being out at night with a blackened face
- Cutting down trees
- Unmarried mothers concealing a stillborn child



William Hogarth – Industry and Idleness, Plate 11; The Idle 'Prentice Executed at Tyburn. Image via Wikimedia.

Despite the severity of the punishment many people charged with these crimes (with the exception of murder, robbery and burglary) were not executed but instead had their sentences either commuted to transportation or permanently postponed often on the grounds of pregnancy of the offender, benefit of clergy, official pardons or performance of military service[4]. Confusion about punishments and the whims of judges affected the consistency of the rule of law as well affecting the strength of the sentences handed as judges were sometimes unwilling to find a defendant guilty knowing they would be executed[5]. People were in general inured to the death and severity of the punishments handed out to criminals and in a society where children were treated as adults the hanging of Michael Hammond and his sister Ann, possibly aged 7 and 11 respectively at Kings Lynne for theft in 1708 made little impact[6].

The Heinous Crime of Forgery

"[Forgery] the false making or altering of a document, with intent to defraud" *– Collins Concise Dictionary*

In 18th and 19th century law forgery was listed under the category of 'Deception' which also included bankruptcy, fraud, perjury and a miscellaneous section which included the illegal procurement of documents such as marriage licences or the unlawful insertion of names into registers. In England the offence of forgery was considered as serious as murder and was treated with the same harshness. Although the early records of the Old Bailey show that many of those convicted of forgery were punished with the pillory and fines later as the Bloody Code legislation was implemented more and more were sent to the gallows.

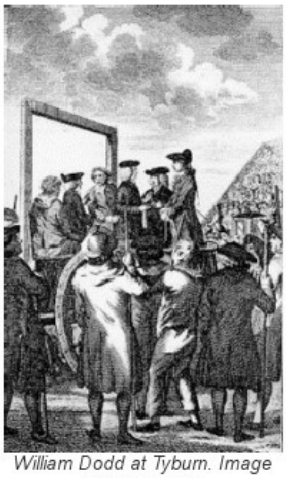
The earliest cases from the Old Bailey records show that the pillory was initially the punishment of choice for most judges for example in May 1689 a John Ingham was indicted for forging the signatures of two Justices of the Peace. His aim was to obtain the release of an Edward Williams from Newgate. He was sentenced to spend three days in the pillory: the first day at Hick's Hall; the second at Temple Bar and; the third at Westminster Hall Gate as well as finding sureties for his good behaviour for twelve months[7].

One of the reasons that forgery came to be seen as such a heinous crime was that with the establishment of the Bank of England in 1694, the English financial system became dependent on paper credit so any attempt to fraudulently copy or counterfeit documents such as stamps or bonds was perceived as an attack on the very foundations on which England stood. In the 1820s forgery along with arson at the Royal Docks, treason, murder, piracy and burglary was one of the last offences which carried a capital sentence. In 1832 forgery (with the exception of the forgery of wills and certain powers of attorney) was taken off that list by a parliamentary act. Eventually in 1837 all forms of forgery were exempt[8].

The minister, the mastermind and the scammer: Three cases of forgery



The pillory. Image from Old Bailey Online.



William Dodd at Tyburn. Image via Wikimedia.

William Dodd – The decadent Anglican minister

William Dodd lived above his means. He enjoyed the good things in life but unfortunately his partiality for fine living resulted in him accumulating bills he was unable to honour. In order to save himself and his wife from bankruptcy he decided to forge a bond for £4200 in the name of a former pupil, the Earl of Chesterfield. All was going well and the banker accepted the bond in good faith. Unluckily Dodd was not the best forger and the banker noticed a blot on the bond and decided to go and see the Earl to get a clean copy signed. Dodd confessed immediately to the fraud and despite a public campaign for a Royal pardon he was hung at Tyburn in June 1777[9]. Dodd was the last person to be hanged for forgery at Tyburn.

Ann Hurle – The master criminal

One of the cleverest and ambitious although ultimately doomed forgery scams was attempted by the 22-year-old Ann Hurle. Her background was sketchy but on the 10 December 1803 she met her friend of six months, a stock broker, George Frenallon at the Bank Coffee House. She persuaded him to obtain a power of attorney for her as she wanted to sell a Bank of England 3% stock which she had been given by a Benjamin Allin of Greenwich. Ann told George that the stock had been given to her as a present in thanks for the good work her aunt, his housekeeper had performed over the years. Once Ann received the power of attorney, she disappeared. On returning with the signed document, she had it witnessed and then took it to Thomas Bateman, a bank clerk at the Bank of England. Bateman who knew Allin's signature became suspicious as the signature differed from that found on other documents. Despite Ann's reassurances that the differences were due to Allin's being over 90 years old, Bateman was not satisfied and he decided to go in person and see Allin. Allin confirmed that the signature was not his. Ann was arrested at Bermondsey and tried and convicted of the charge of attempting to defraud the Bank of England of £500 (which is in today's money over a quarter of a million pounds). On Wednesday 8th February Ann was hanged near St Sepulchre's Church[10].



1709 Bank of England Exchequer Bill. Image from Just Collecting website.

Thomas Maynard – The shameless scammer

Thomas Maynard was hanged at Newgate on the 31 December 1829. His crime was defrauding His Majesty's Custom House of the amount of £1973 by counterfeiting a warrant order and fixing the signatures of three Commissioners of Customs to it. He was also accused of a secondary charge of trying to defraud a Sir William Boothby. Witnesses attested to Maynard's and his accomplice, Richard Hubbard Jones decadent behaviour after receiving the money. They said that the two men lived extravagantly, showing off their money and allowing women who called themselves their wives to run up huge debts with tradesmen. Both Maynard and Hubbard were arrested trying to travel to France. £280 were found on Maynard and £250 on another unknown man who was traveling with them. Strangely only Maynard was convicted of the crime, for some reason Jones was not tried. Maynard has the distinction of being the last person to be hanged for forgery in England.

Sarah Whitehead:The Black Nun of Threadneedle Street



The Bank of England, Threadneedle Street. Image via Wikimedia.

One of the most famous hauntings in London and the one that always sends chills along my spine is believed to be that of the ghost of Sarah Whitehead, otherwise known as the Black Nun. Sarah's tragic tale begins in 1811 when her brother, Philip, a disgruntled former clerk in the Cashiers Office of the Bank of England was found guilty of forgery and attempting to defraud the bank. On the day of the trial, Sarah's friends worried about her reaction kept the news of his conviction from her by persuading her to leave the rooms which she shared with her brother and go with them to their house off of Fleet Street. When her brother failed to return home, Sarah tried to find him. Either her brother had never told her he had left the bank or she had nowhere else to look since she kept going back to the bank in the desperate hope that someone would have heard from him. Eventually either out of annoyance or pity, one of the clerks finally blurted out the truth. The shock destroyed her mind. On her death she was buried in the churchyard of St Christopher le Stocks. When the church was demolished in 1781 in order to extend the bank's premises, the bodies were re-interred at Nunhead Cemetery. The former graveyard became the gardens of the bank.

There are different accounts of what happened after Sarah was finally told the truth. One version is that she visited the bank every day for the remainder of her 25 years asking politely for her brother whilst another that on her visits she was verbally abusive to the bank's staff. A third recounts how she became convinced that the bank had stolen money from her and would demand that they return what they had taken. Eventually in 1818 the bank's governors tired of her constant presence gave her a sum of money on the provision that she would never come back, a promise she kept.

Even though the precise details of the story vary slightly, the one thing they all agree on is Sarah's appearance. For the rest of her life she always wore full mourning weeds which consisted of a long black gown and full black veil.

Have you seen my brother?



Sarah Whitehead – The Black Nun of Threadneedle St. Public Domain(?)

For over the next two hundred years Sarah's spirit has been unable to rest. She has been seen at the Bank of England itself, at Bank station (where railway staff have recalled how she leaves behind a feeling of terrible sorrow and hopelessness[11]) and in the former graveyard of the church where she was originally buried. Those witnesses who have seen her in the garden have said that she walks hesitantly, groping her way along as if she is blind then she falls to her knees and beats the ground with her fists, crying and shaking violently before she suddenly vanishes[12].

She has been most often seen at night wandering the streets around the bank and in particular Threadneedle Street still intent on finding her beloved brother. She has been reportedly seen by numerous people, some who knew the legend, most who didn't. People of all ages, beliefs and lifestyles, people alone or with others have claimed to have seen a woman dressed peculiarly in black, walking slowly along the road. It is usually her strange attire which first catches their eye. Sometimes she stops them and with eyes downcast asks politely about her brother. Receiving a negative answer she turns and walks dejectedly away, disappearing from sight. Some people seeing her walk past are overcome by a feeling of intense grief and loneliness and approach her asking her if she needs help. Needless to say she just turns and asks her constant question, 'Have you seen my brother?'

History or urban legend?

When looking at different websites and accounts of the Black Nun they all give Sarah's brother's name as Philip. On one of the websites the blogger states that there is no record of a Philip Whitehead appearing in the Old Bailey. Searching through the online records I agree, there is no evidence of Philip Whitehead but there is a

Paul Whitehead aged 36 who was convicted of forgery and sentenced to be hanged. Looking at the proceedings of the trial, certain details emerge which fit with the legend surrounding Sarah Whitehead including the date of the trial, the 30th October 1811 and the fact that Whitehead was a former clerk in the Cashiers Office at the Bank of England. The transcript from the trial records that Whitehead was indicted on six counts of forgery, the main charge being *''for feloniously forging and counterfeiting an acceptance on a certain bill of exchange for 87 l. 10 s. with [the] intention to defraud* [13]". Whitehead was hanged at Newgate on the 29th January 1812 in front of a large crowd. He was described as being of '*genteel appearance'* and who together with the five other condemned men "*met their fate with decent fortitude, and when on the fatal scaffold shook hands, after which they were launched into eternity…*"[14].



Courtroom scene at the Old Bailey. Image via Wikimedia.

Maybe Paul Whitehead is not Philip Whitehead but if he isn't then why is there no record of the latter's trial or maybe the legend of Sarah has been fabricated based on Paul Whitehead's crime and death. Personally I believe that it was a mistake and Philip is Paul Whitehead and that the story of the historical Sarah is true. I also hope that if her spirit is lost that one day she will be reunited with her brother and finally gain the peace of mind she has been searching for, for so long.

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4 thoughts on "The Bloody Code and the Black Nun of Threadneedle Street"

1. Lenora*said:*

December 8, 2015 at 8:21 pm

Miss Jessel, thank you for another fascinating and well researched post. Your theory about the records relating to Paul Whitehead is really intriguing – if the Black Nun ever approaches you and asks 'have you seen my brother?' you can tell her yes – on paper at least!

- Miss_Jessel*said:*

  December 10, 2015 at 10:13 am

  Thank you Lenora. I loved writing the article and doing the research. The Old Bailey records are fascinating.

2. guyportman*said:*

December 11, 2015 at 8:42 pm

A fascinating post. Stealing from a rabbit warren – what a bizarre crime. One would have thought it was covered by the General Poaching law.

- Miss_Jessel*said:*

  December 12, 2015 at 12:10 pm

  Thank you for your comment. It seems that the Government decided to sub-divide crimes to a (in my opinion) ridiculous degree. I think that from what I read arson had seven sub-divisions. Maybe they thought that they were making the law clearer for judges to implement.

Blog at WordPress.com. The Chateau Theme .

Rumors wrongly blame sea otters for Soberanes Fire

ksbw.com

KSBW

- Published 7:00 PM PDT Aug 01, 2016



Elizabeth Haslam / DMT Imaging Elizabeth Haslam / DMT Imaging Stan Russell

BIG SUR, Calif. **—TUESDAY UPDATE: Soberanes Fire caused by illegal unattended campfire, Cal Fire says**

- Soberanes Fire caused by illegal unattended campfire,...

The massive Soberanes Fire was caused by someone who lit an illegal campfire, Cal Fire unit chief Brennan Blue said Tuesday. Prosecutors are considering filing criminal charges if a suspect is identified.

Cal Fire and U.S. Forest Service officials have not released any information about leads their investigators are following as they try to determine what caused the Soberanes Fire.

Some Central Coast residents asked KSBW on its Facebook page if the 41,000-acre wildfire was intentionally sparked by an arsonist.

When two groups of men who claimed to be "lost hikers" were rescued and sheriff's deputies determined they were really illegal marijuana growers in Garrapata State Park, many wondered if they were to blame.

The most recent, and odd, rumor circulating around the Monterey Peninsula blames furry ocean animals floating in the ocean nearby-- sea otters.

When flames first sparked on the morning of July 22, the wildfire was only a few acres.

One Palo Colorado Canyon resident said it spread out of control before firefighters could contain it because helicopters were denied access to collect ocean water by the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary because it would disturb sea otters.

"They said there was a large otter population in that area and stated it would cause undo stress on the otter population," the homeowner allegedly told shoppers at a Carmel Valley Safeway store.

Sea otters are federally protected in the Monterey Bay.

As it turns out, the sea otters were wrongly accused for causing the blaze to flare out of control.

KSBW's news crews shot video showing Cal Fire helicopters scooping water out of the ocean during the early hours of the wildfire.

Scott Kathey of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary said firefighting helicopters always have clearance to collect ocean water during an emergency.

The true cause of the Soberanes Fire remains under investigation.



Soberanes Fire

Tags Soberanes Fire sea otters

KSBW Monterey
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20 KG ice 'meteorite' destroys car in central Rome

06/07

thelocal.it

The Local



20 KG ice 'meteorite' destroys car in central Rome

The Local · 27 Jul 2016, 22:13

Published: 27 Jul 2016 12:13 GMT+02:00
Updated: 27 Jul 2016 22:13 GMT+02:00

A gigantic ice meteorite, weighing some 20KG, fell from the skies over Rome and landed on a parked Toyota Aygo on Tuesday evening.

Fortunately, nobody was hurt in the incident, which occurred in the Monteverde area of the city, but the falling ice completely destroyed the car's windscreen dashboard, passenger seats and gearbox.

Nearby residents even reported hearing a loud explosion at around 9.15 PM which sent many out onto their balconies to investigate the source of the noise.

For the moment it is unsure where the potentially deadly iceball came from, but investigators think it may have been caused by a leaking toilet on a passing jet liner.

'Blue ice' is the name commonly given to a mixture of human waste and liquid disinfectant which can leak from an aircraft's waste system in case of a malfunction. The waste water then freezes at high altitude and then falls to earth as a giant iceball.

"I went onto the balcony of my boyfriend's house at 10 pm and noticed what I thought was a white plastic bag on the front seat of my car, which I hadn't left there," the Aygo's owner, Fabiola Nacci told Rome daily, Il Messaggero.

Nacci went down to check and discovered that it had been devastated by the falling ice and was filled with shards of frozen water.

She immediately called the police, who collected samples of the ice for analysis and interviewed local residents.

If analysis proves the meteorite was indeed the frozen remnants of a leaking septic tank, the aircraft responsible could face charges over violating aircraft safety laws if it can be tracked down using flight data.

"Now I'm without a car," Nacci lamented.

"The repairs will cost me about half of the Aygo's current value," she added.

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Two injured and hospitalized after boat runs ashore at Dauphin Island Airport

By Prescotte Stokes III | pstokes@al.com on July 15, 2016 at 10:35 PM, updated July 15, 2016 at 11:19 PM

al.com

Coast Guard Sector Mobile officials confirmed that a boating vessel carrying three people ran aground at 8:46 p.m. into the Dauphin Island Airport on Friday (July 15) night.

CGSM Petty Officer, Mark Cole said that all three passengers were in a 18-foot Mako boating vessel that was traveling through the Pass Aux Herons area just north of Dauphin Island. At some point the vessel ran aground onto the airport property.

At the time of the accident Coast Guard officials were performing night training flights in a helicopter at the airport. After seeing the boat come ashore, they quickly landed and helped remove the victims from the boat.

One adult male and one young girl were hurt in the accident and flown to Providence Hospital. They are both currently listed in stable condition. The other passenger, a teenage boy was treated at the scene by EMS officials for lacerations on his arms. He was later taken to the hospital for further evaluation.

The Dauphin Island Police Department also had investigators at the scene and at this time are unsure what led to the accident. Coast Guard investigators said they did not find any fishing equipment on board the boat.

At this time investigators do not think the incident was not related to the Alabama Deep Sea Fishing Rodeo taking place on Dauphin Island this weekend.

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The Soviets Who Bootlegged Western Music on X-Rays: Their Story Told in New Video & Audio Documentaries

in History , Music | July 12th, 2016 Leave a Comment openculture.com

When you learn that Soviet music-lovers bootleged Western rock, pop, jazz, and more on the surfaces of discarded x-ray plates, you can't help but want to learn a bit about it. We posted about that curious Cold War phenomenon back in 2014, but much more material on this culture of "bone music" has emerged in the years since, including Stephen Coates and Paul Heartfield's book *X-Ray Audio: The Strange Story of Soviet Music on the Bone*. They also put together the fourteen-minute companion documentary above, featuring conversations with some of the actual participants in this forbidden musical scene which lasted roughly from the late 1940s to the mid-1960s, when tape recorders came around and the censors loosened up.

"This is a truly fascinating subject that seems to captivate people by combining pain and suffering reflected in the X-rays with the pleasure of listening to music," writes filmmaker and photographer Michael Dzierza, who produced the short video above on Coates and Hartfield's work with x-ray audio in which they discuss the origins of their fascination with this illicit medium and how that fascination turned into a subject for a long-term multimedia research project. The world of bone music also became the highly suitable subject for an episode of *Fugitive Waves*, the podcast by radio producers the Kitchen Sisters on "lost recordings and shards of sound, along with new tales from remarkable people around the world — people with a mission, a purpose, a story to tell":

The Soviets who made it possible for their fellow citizens to enjoy the sounds they craved — whether music forbidden for its foreign origin or music performed by musicians hailing from U.S.S.R. countries but deemed insufficiently loyal to the regime — certainly had a mission, purpose, and story to tell, and their efforts have left as cultural artifacts some of the more fascinating lost recordings and shards of sound in recent history. Now that almost everyone in the developed world takes for granted their 21st-century ability to share high-fidelity music more or less instantly, it can restore a measure of gratitude to learn more about these medical records turned musical records, passed in dark alleys between one trenchcoat to another under the ever-present threat of imprisonment. The vinyl revival has happened; could an x-ray audio revival be on its way?

Soviets Bootlegged Western Pop Music on Discarded X-Rays: Hear Original Audio Samples

"Glory to the Conquerors of the Universe!": Propaganda Posters from the Soviet Space Race (1958-1963)

How to Spot a Communist Using Literary Criticism: A 1955 Manual from the U.S. Military

Louis Armstrong Plays Historic Cold War Concerts in East Berlin & Budapest (1965)

Based in Seoul, Colin Marshall writes and broadcasts on cities and culture. He's at work on a book about Los Angeles, A Los Angeles Primer*, the video series* The City in Cinema*, the crowdfunded journalism project* Where Is the City of the Future?*, and the* Los Angeles Review of Books' *Korea Blog. Follow him on Twitter at @colinmarshall or on k.*

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Boy charged with stealing bus now accused of taking van on joy ride

By Judy Harrison , BDN Staff
Posted at 10:16 a.m. Last modified June 26, 2016, at 7:25 p.m.

bangordailynews.com



A 12-year-old Bangor boy was taken into custody early Saturday morning after he allegedly stole a 2011 Kia van. Bangor police Sgt. Jason Stuart stopped the van with his cruiser at Broadway near Center Street after the driver refused to stop.

BANGOR, Maine — A 12-year-old boy charged May 3 with taking a school bus for a joy ride was apprehended again Saturday morning after allegedly stealing a van and driving it through the streets of Bangor's east side, until a police officer stopped it with his cruiser.

The Bangor boy, whose name is not being released, is charged with driving to endanger, a misdemeanor, and eluding a police officer and theft, both felonies.

Police Chief Mark Hathaway said officer Evan Haskell noticed a 2011 white Kia van on Ohio Street, near the intersection of Griffin Road, about 4 a.m. The van was driving without headlights, had front end damage and was dragging part of the front bumper on the pavement.

Haskell signaled for the vehicle to stop, but the driver refused, the chief said. Sgt. Jason Stuart tried to get the van to stop on Broadway near Center Street. He was able to stop the van with the front end of his cruiser, Hathaway said.

No one was injured, but Stuart's patrol car had minor damage. The van being driven by the boy also was damaged.

Officers are investigating how the damage Haskell noticed on the van, which is consistent with prior collisions, happened, the chief said.

"We have requested the Maine State Police investigate the collision between the patrol car and the other vehicle," Hathaway said.

Additional charges could be filed against the boy. Further information about his status was not available Saturday morning.

Under Maine law, the boy's name and more information about the incident will be released in the next few weeks. Information about juveniles charged with misdemeanors is not available to the public.

"This individual was involved in similar conduct prior to this," Sgt. Tim Cotton, spokesman for the Bangor police, said Saturday.

In May, the boy was charged with unauthorized use of a vehicle and operating without a license, according to a previously published report.

The bus was parked at the John T. Cyr and Sons lot on Ohio Street when it was taken around 7:30

p.m. Tuesday May 3, Cotton said last month.

The keys were in the vehicle when the boy got access to the bus.

The boy's joy ride was captured on cellphone video by John W. St. Germain III, who spotted the stolen vehicle with his girlfriend. The pair subsequently began following the vehicle and called police.

St. Germain, who got onto the bus and intervened when it stopped at the intersection of Griffin Road and Ohio Streets, was presented with a challenge coin by Bangor police a few days after the incident.

If convicted of a felony, the boy could be confined to Long Creek Youth Development Center in South Portland until he turns 21.

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Brexit Octopus: Why People Love 'Psychic' Animals

Jun 25, 2016 10:00 AM ET

seeker.com

http://www.seeker.com/why-people-love-psychic-animals-1882502436.html

People have always been fascinated by performing animals.

While the world debates the Great Britain's decision to leave the European Union, at least one U.K. celebrity's take is well known.

She is Otto the Octopus, a star at the Manchester Sea Life Centre.

As the results were being tallied, the "Lancashire Evening Post" reported, "Many claim the historic vote is too close to call -- but Otto the psychic octopus is in no doubt. The clairvoyant cephalopod, who lives at Manchester Sea Life Centre, has been using Lego to make predictions in her tank. Two Lego blocks, one with 'Leave' and one with 'Remain' were placed in front of Otto to cast her vote. There was no wavering -- she thinks Britain will remain in the EU after tomorrow's vote."

Given the vote to leave (52 to 48 percent) Otto's accuracy is questionable, but a larger question is why people would seek out an octopus's opinion on the matter -- it's not as if staying in the EU would have led to a larger tank or tastier snacks for the creature. Why do people love psychic animals so much?

For one thing, most of the prognosticating animals are awfully cute; think of the groundhog Punxsutawney Phil, for example. He—or, rather, his various incarnations—have long been loved and celebrated as a whimsical American rodent hero. Of course some of the psychic animals—like Otto—are slimy and hardly cuddly, but are mascots nonetheless. Many of these animals are of course promoted as psychic because it's a fun, inexpensive, and irresistible publicity tool. Millions of people who otherwise would never have heard of the Manchester Sea Life Centre will now know about its resident octopus and her vote.

Another reason is that people have always been attracted to, and fascinated by, performing animals. Magic historian and actor Ricky Jay devotes a chapter to such animal marvels in his book "Learned Pigs & Fireproof Women: Unique, Eccentric, and Amazing Entertainers," noting that an 1817 advertisement touted "Toby the Sapient Pig," whose abilities included spelling, reading, playing cards, telling time, and -- perhaps most astonishingly -- reading an audience member's thoughts (hopefully the person wasn't reminiscing about the delicious bacon he had for breakfast).

Those porcine wonders were illusions and tricks, of course, but not all were; a horse exhibited throughout Europe in the 1890s named Clever Hans was said to be able to count, read, and spell. Hans was enormously popular with paying crowds, and seemed a genuine mystery for several years. A skeptical researcher, however, eventually discovered that Hans was responding to unconscious cues from his trainer, who would make subtle movements when Hans had selected the correct answer. It wasn't a hoax or fraud but instead what psychologists call "unconscious cueing."

Animals do in fact have superhuman senses that can appear mysterious or even paranormal. Dogs have a remarkable sense of smell that can track fugitives and detect minute quantities of drugs or explosives (even through heavy masking agents such as perfume or ammonia); birds can migrate using celestial cues; and elephants can detect faint vibrations -- including other elephants' footsteps

-- for miles.

Many people believe that animals can predict earthquakes, and there's some scientific truth to it. Animals may sense unusual vibrations or changes in air pressure coming from one direction that suggest they should move in the opposite direction. If a herd of animals are seen fleeing before an earthquake, all that is needed is for one or two of them to skittishly sense danger and the rest will follow.

Folklore is rife with superstitions and omens based on animal behavior. Perhaps the most famous is that crossing a black cat's path brings bad luck, but there are many others across eras and cultures. Some people believe, for example, that encountering other animals (including bees, crickets, and ladybugs) brings good luck.

Ancient Romans believed that animals could tell the future by spilling their guts—literally. Haruspication, a popular fortune-telling practice, involved disemboweling a recently butchered animal (usually poultry or sheep) and spreading its intestines on the ground to see if the bloody entrails formed any symbols that could be interpreted as omens about a specific question, or the future in general.

Aside from Otto there are many predicting animals, including a camel named Shaheen, an elephant named Nelly, a dog named Roy Dog-son, and Pele the Psychic Piranha. To be fair, some seemingly psychic animals do predict outcomes at a statistically higher rate than would be expected by chance. But we need not invoke some paranormal powers to account for this, since with enough animals making enough predictions, some will outperform others merely by random chance.

The best-known "psychic" animals are known precisely because they succeed; local prognosticators who perform significantly below chance aren't likely to make the news. And while things didn't work out on the Brexit vote, whether Otto has a future predicting European soccer games may be decided soon.

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Sand sculpture of busty Cape Cod mermaid draws complaints

ottawasun.com

SUN+ *THE ASSOCIATED PRESS*

First posted: Sunday, July 10, 2016 09:43 PM EDT | Updated: Sunday, July 10, 2016 09:49 PM EDT



This July 7, 2016 photo shows the mermaid sand sculpture in front of Salty's Seafood Restaurant in West Yarmouth, Mass. Here, the sand sculpture is under a small tent enclosure outside the restaurant and is part of a larger collection of sculptures throughout Yarmouth. (Steve Haines/Cape Cod Times via AP)

YARMOUTH, Mass. -- A busty mermaid sculpted from sand and placed outside a popular Cape Cod restaurant is raising eyebrows and triggering complaints.

The town of Yarmouth, Massachusetts, and the local Chamber of Commerce say they fielded complaints from locals about the exaggerated proportions of the mermaid's chest. Yarmouth's police department took down photos of the sculpture from its Facebook page after residents said they found the work of art offensive.

The mermaid clad in a clamshell bikini is one of 41 sand sculptures placed around town as part of the annual Yarmouth Summer Celebration.

Salty's restaurant owner Raymond Roy tells the Cape Cod Times he's surprised at the fuss.

Roy says the mermaid isn't nude and shouldn't be censored.

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The Cambridge Death Curve Part 1: An Unspeakable Crime

01/11/2016 by Michael Kleen

[Mysteriousheartland.com] Life is slow in Henry County, Illinois. With 86.7 percent of its land devoted to agriculture, the most commotion a visitor is likely to hear comes from tractors rumbling across the land as farmers plow their fields. Cambridge, the county seat, is a village of little more than 2,000 residents. Less than a mile outside of Cambridge sits Timber Ridge Road. As motorists travel west along Timber Ridge, they meet a sharp curve marked by a Mulberry tree and an old, rustic fence that divides two cornfields. Here the wind gently caresses the grass along the roadside.



The Cambridge, Illinois "Death Curve." Photo by Michael Kleen

This bucolic scene hides a dark history, a history that few would remember if it weren't for the ghost stories whispered from one generation to another. The stories concern a crime eerily similar to one we are familiar with today, only the murders committed near this curve were much more brutal, if equally horrifying.

In June 2001, the story of Andrea Yates, a deeply religious mother who drowned her five children in Houston, Texas, shocked many Americans. Years before the murders, Yates and her husband had fallen under the spell of a preacher named Michael Woroniecki. Woroniecki, besides encouraging them to have as many children as possible, often scolded Andrea and her husband for their ungodly behavior. Andrea already had four children when she suffered a mental breakdown and tried to commit suicide in 1999. Her psychiatrist counseled her not to have any more children, but in 2000 Andrea and her husband conceived a fifth child even after she had been hospitalized for her illness.

During the spring of 2001, her mental health rapidly deteriorated until, one tragic day in June, she drowned all five children in their bathtub. She placed the bodies of the four youngest on the bed next to each other and covered them with a sheet. Later, while in jail, Andrea told a psychiatrist, "My children weren't righteous… The way I was raising them, they could never be saved. They were doomed to parish in the fires of hell."

The Yates case raised awareness of postpartum depression, a mental illness which affects a small percentage of new mothers. While this alone does not explain why a woman would commit filicide, a history of depression is one of the highest risk factors for postpartum depression. The illness was unknown in 1905 when one deeply emotionally disturbed woman in rural Illinois, Julia Markham, used an ax to take the lives of her seven children.

Like Andrea Yates, Julia had previous episodes of severe depression and a history of attempted suicide. Other elements of the two incidents were uncomfortably similar. One stark contrast was that in 1905, although the story of the Markham murders found its way into several local newspapers, the national media never picked up on the tragedy. There were no interviews or book deals. Julia's heinous crime faded from memory and became nothing more than legend.



THE ARGUS, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 1905.—SIXTEEN PAGES.

HENRY WOMAN'S AWFUL DEED

Mrs. Clarence Markham While Insane Murders Seven Children With an Ax and Sets House Afire—Succeeds in Killing Herself.

CAMBRIDGE, ILL., SEPT. 30.—MRS. CLARENCE MARKHAM, WIFE OF A FARM LABORER LIVING ON THE JOHNSTON FARM SEVEN MILES SOUTHWEST OF THIS PLACE, KILLED HER SEVEN SMALL CHILDREN WITH AN AX ABOUT 11 O'CLOCK THIS MORNING, SET FIRE TO THE HOUSE, HACKED HER THROAT WITH A KNIFE AND LEAPED INTO THE FLAMES. HELP ARRIVED IN TIME TO RESCUE HER BUT SHE DIED AFTER MAKING A CONFESSION OF HER TERRIBLE DEED.

MRS. MARKHAM HAD BEEN ACTING QUEERLY FOR SOME TIME, AND HER HUSBAND, WHO WAS EMPLOYED ON A NEARBY FARM, HAD KEPT THE CHILDREN OUT OF SCHOOL TO LOOK AFTER HER. THE OLDEST CHILD WAS 10 YEARS OF AGE, AND THEY RANGED IN AGE DOWN TO A BABE IN ARMS.

ABOUT 11 O'CLOCK TODAY NEIGHBORS NOTICED THAT THE MARKHAM HOUSE WAS AFIRE, AND HURRYING TO THE PLACE, WERE JUST IN TIME TO DRAG MRS. MARKHAM OUT. IT WAS NOTICED THAT SHE WAS BADLY CUT ABOUT THE THROAT. WHEN ABLE TO SPEAK, SHE CONFESSED THAT THE BODIES OF HER SEVEN BABES WERE IN THE BURNING HOUSE.

LAY BODIES OUT ON BED.

MRS. MARKHAM APPEARED RATIONAL AT THE TIME SHE TOLD HER STORY, AND SHE REALIZED THAT SHE HAD BUT A SHORT TIME TO LIVE. SHE SAID SHE HAD KILLED THE CHILDREN ONE BY ONE WITH AN AX, PLACED THEIR BODIES SIDE BY SIDE ON A BED, SATURATED THE WHOLE WITH KEROSENE, AND THEN SET FIRE TO IT. SHE COULD NOT EXPLAIN WHY SHE HAD DONE SO. SOON AFTER RELATING THESE FACTS SHE PASSED AWAY.

AFTER THE FIRE HAD BURNED OUT SUFFICIENTLY A SEARCH OF THE RUINS WAS MADE AND PROOF OF THE TRUTH OF THE WOMAN'S STORY WAS HAD. ALL SEVEN CORPSES WERE FOUND, BEING IN A BADLY CHARRED CONDITION.

The Cambridge, Illinois "Death Curve." Photo by Michael Kleen

The murders, however, were all too real. In 1896, Julia Johnson married a man from Andover named Clarence B. Markham, and the young couple settled down on a farm in Andover Township outside of Cambridge, Illinois. Although Julia had a colored past, by all accounts the Markhams began a happy and prosperous life together. Ten years before their marriage, when Julia was 13 years old, she tried to commit suicide by jumping in a well, but was rescued.

Her mother, Mary E. Johnson, had a history of mental illness. According to the *Cambridge Chronicle*, she had been "mentally deranged for some time," and was in the insane annex at the county hospital in Knoxville. Authorities committed her on September 13 for "wandering spells."

In nine years of marriage, Mrs. Markham gave birth to seven children, an average of one every 15 months. There were four girls and three boys, aged from between five months to eight and a half years. Their names were Clara, Harry, Charles, Mary, Lucy, Eliza, and Asa. Coincidentally, Andrea Yates' youngest child was six months old at the time of the drowning, but Andrea had drawn a bath a month earlier with the same sinister intent.

Something happened during the first five months after the birth of both Julia and Andrea's youngest that led them to consider murder. Whether it was the stress of feeding so many mouths, or depression triggered by the births, we will never know. Julia Markham died with her children, leaving behind only a short letter to give a glimpse of her motivation.

On the morning of Saturday September 30, 1905, while her husband labored in a neighboring field, Julia Markham, "committed one of the most dastardly deeds that has ever occurred in Henry County." At around 11 o'clock, Julia sent her two eldest children to a nearby spring to bring back water. While they were gone, she took an ax and swung it at the heads of her five youngest, killing them instantly. When her eldest returned, she dealt with them the same way. One can only imagine the horror of the scene inside that house.

Julia had carefully planned the massacre and intended to commit suicide afterward, but the knife that she used to cut her throat was too dull. Reeling from the wound, she laid her children out on a bed, side by side, and doused them with coal oil. She lit the oil on fire and the entire house went up in flames. She intended to die with her children, but the heat of the conflagration proved to be too much and she tried to crawl to safety.

Meanwhile, the Markham's neighbors saw smoke billowing from the house and rushed over. Intending to save the children, they instead stumbled on a terrible scene. "Mrs. Markham stayed in the burning house until nearly all her clothing was burned off, and then crawled out doors," the *Chronicle* reported. Sheriff B.H. Stiers and his deputy, a Mr. E.A. Swain, and a doctor from Woodhull, quickly arrived and found Julia clutching to life.

Dr. Clanahan stitched the wound in Julia's throat, but told her that she didn't have long to live. Seeing the end was finally near, she confessed to the crime and died at 3 o'clock that afternoon. "The sufferings of the woman from the self-inflicted knife wounds and severe burns were something dreadful," wrote the *Chronicle*. However, "she seemed perfectly sane after the deed had been committed." Flames consumed the house, and the sheriff found the bodies of the children in a corner of the smoldering ruins. They were burned beyond recognition.
Continued in Part 2...

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Cambridge Chronicle (Cambridge) 5 October 1905.

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Comments

1. Ken Smith says:
01/13/2016 at 11:25 pm

Original article say they lived 7 miles southwest of Cambridge in Andover township. "Dead man's curve" is only about 2 miles.

- Michael Kleen says:
01/14/2016 at 6:04 am

Newspapers weren't known for being very accurate at the time. That, or the legend migrated to a new location over years of retelling.

2. James Stratton says:
01/14/2016 at 7:53 am

The article was great, but to me you made it sound like the Yates murder happened in Cambridge when it didn't. It happened in Texas. You should have mentioned that it was in Texas, not Illinois.

- Michael Kleen says:
01/14/2016 at 9:56 am

Hm, I can see how someone could make that mistake, thanks for pointing it out..

Trackbacks

1. The Cambridge Death Curve Part 2: Cries from the Grave – Mysterious Heartland says:
01/12/2016 at 11:42 am

[…] Continued from Part 1… Shortly after Julia Markham used an ax to murder her seven children, a postman discovered a […]

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The Cambridge Death Curve Part 2: Cries from the Grave

mysteriousheartland.com

01/12/2016 by Michael Kleen

[Mysteriousheartland.com] *Continued from Part 1*... Shortly after Julia Markham used an ax to murder her seven children, a postman discovered a letter she had written to her husband. The letter proved the murders had been premeditated. "Dear Clarence," she wrote. "This is to say goodbye to you. Some give their souls for others, and I will do this for my children. God bless them! They will all die happy in the arms of Jesus. I will meet them there, and some day you will join us, too."


AWFUL TRAGEDY WAS THE DEED OF A MANIAC

AIR BRAKES FAIL; TRAIN IS DITCHED

Coroner's Jury Pronounces Mrs. Clarence Markham Insane.

SLEW HER CHILDREN

Further Developments Find Her Mother a Maniac.

The probable gravesite of the Markham children. Photo by Michael Kleen

A coroner's jury ruled that Julia had acted while temporarily insane. An investigation into her personal history revealed that she had suffered from an emotional breakdown several months before the crime. "As early as July Mrs. Markham manifested symptoms of a diseased mind," the Rock Island *Argus* reported. Her father visited the family during the summer and said that Julia was suffering from "extreme melancholia, due... to the dreary monotony and drudgery of her life." Her eldest children had to stay home from school to watch after her health.

On the morning of October 2, as the Wright brothers prepared for the flight of their third airplane, Julia Markham and her children were laid to rest in nearby Rose Dale Cemetery. The children were interred in one casket and Julia in another. Distraught over the gruesome deaths of his wife and children, Clarence Markham moved away from the area.

Decades passed, and the ruin of the Markham's home was plowed over. Their aging, red barn remained, however, and became a focal point for local teens who grew up hearing stories about the murders. Fact blended with fiction, and people began to report seeing the ghost of Julia Markham along the roadside. They blamed accidents at the curve in Timber Ridge Rd. on her ghost.

The particulars of the case became ever more confused. Like a generational game of phone tag, each retelling of the tale altered the details until the fact that a woman murdered her children became the only kernel of truth. For instance, the story according to an anonymous contributor to Strangeusa.com was that Clarence Markham died of an illness, leaving his wife to take care of their seven children.

"So one day she took her kids lined them up in a line in the front yard. And she decapitated each one," the post read. "When she realized what she had done she set her house on fire and shot herself in the head." From then on, at exactly 10:27pm Julia's ghost could be seen sitting on the fencepost near what became known as "Death Curve."



The probable gravesite of the Markham children. Photo by Michael Kleen

In 2007, the Moline *Dispatch* ran an article on the Cambridge Death Curve that featured one eyewitness account of the haunting from 18 years earlier. The red barn was still standing at the time, and two young women drove out there looking for a place to hang out. As they neared the curve, they caught sight of something unexpected. "On the fence, you could see something white floating off into the cornfield," one of the women told the newspaper.

"It was white with long flowing hair... I didn't know what the heck it was." But a translucent phantom was not the only thing spotted along the road. Paranormal researchers Chad Lewis and Terry Fisk spoke with one woman who told them that she had seen a spook light floating near the old fence.

There is nothing unusual about the curve in Timber Ridge Road, even less so now that the ruined barn has been torn down. The graves of Julia Markham and her children are unmarked. Aside from a few articles on dusty microfilm reels, nothing tangible remains to remind passersby of the unspeakable acts committed outside the village of Cambridge that fateful day in 1905. Yet the

act of a mother murdering her own children—something so anathema to our basic values—is a stain that will not be so easily removed. Even after a hundred years, the spirits of Julia and her children cry out from the grave, never to be forgotten.

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Filed Under: haunted, Roads and Bridges Tagged With: Andover Township, Andrea Yates, Ax Murder, Cambridge, Cambridge Chronicle, Clarence B. Markham, Henry County, Illinois, Julia Markham, Murder, postpartum depression, Timber Ridge Road

> 1. The Cambridge Death Curve Part 1: An Unspeakable Crime – Mysterious Heartland says:
> 01/12/2016 at 11:42 am
>
> [...] Dr. Clanahan stitched the wound in Julia's throat, but told her that she didn't have long to live. Seeing the end was finally near, she confessed to the crime and died at 3 o'clock that afternoon. "The sufferings of the woman from the self-inflicted knife wounds and severe burns were something dreadful," wrote the Chronicle. However, "she seemed perfectly sane after the deed had been committed." Flames consumed the house, and the sheriff found the bodies of the children in a corner of the smoldering ruins. They were burned beyond recognition. Continued in Part 2... [...]

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No, Canada Hasn't Legalized Bestiality

Dan Evon 7 hours ago
7 hours ago

snopes.com

http://www.snopes.com/canada-legalizes-beastiality

snopes

Penetration Legislation

The Supreme Court of Canada ruled that the country's current legal definition of bestiality only banned penetrative sexual acts with animals, but didn't legalize any activities.



Wikipedia

Claim: Canada legalized oral sex with animals.

mostly false

WHAT'S TRUE: Canada's Supreme Court ruled that the current definition of bestiality only included penetrative acts.

WHAT'S FALSE: Canada passed a new law legalizing oral sex with animals.

Example: [*Collected via e-mail, June 2016*]

> Canada's courts supposedly legalized sex acts between humans and animals? I assume it is not true, but haven't seen anything to dispute the article that my friend posted on FB.

Origin:On 9 June 2016, Canada's Supreme Court ruled that the country's current bestiality laws only banned sexual acts that involved penetration:

> Supreme Court judges ruled 6-1 in favor of a man from British Columbia in western Canada convicted for sexual assault and bestiality after he involved the family dog in the abuse of his two stepdaughters.
>
> The man, known only by the initials "D.L.W." to protect his stepdaughters' identity, successfully appealed his bestiality conviction in a provincial court, arguing that according to the law, the offense of bestiality requires penetration, which his actions did not involve.
>
> Justice Thomas Cromwell, writing for all concurring judges, said in the decision that penetration has

> always been required to secure bestiality convictions and courts do not have the power to rule otherwise.

Shortly after the ruling was issued, several web sites reported that Canada had legalized oral sex with animals. The country, however, did not issue any new laws regarding bestiality, nor did they change any existing laws. The Supreme Court based its ruling on the legal definition of bestiality already in its criminal code:

> Applying the principles that guide statutory interpretation leads to the conclusion in this case that the term bestiality has a well-established legal meaning and refers to sexual intercourse between a human and an animal. Penetration has always been understood to be an essential element of bestiality. Parliament adopted that term without adding a definition of it and the legislative history and evolution of the relevant provisions show no intent to depart from the well-understood legal meaning of the term. Moreover, the courts should not, by development of the common law, broaden the scope of liability for the offence of bestiality. Any expansion of criminal liability for this offence is within Parliament's exclusive domain.
>
> [...]
>
> In this case, the term bestiality did have a clear legal meaning when Parliament used that term without further definition in the English version of the 1955 *Criminal Code* . Bestiality meant buggery with an animal and required penetration. It was clear that to secure a conviction, the prosecution had to prove that penetration of an animal, or, in the case of women, penetration by an animal, had occurred. This was the state of the law when the *Offences Against the Person Act, 1861* was enacted in England. The offence in substantially the same form was carried over into the first English version of the Canadian *Criminal Code* in 1892 and continued to be in force until the offence called bestiality was introduced into the English version of the *Code* in the 1955 revisions.

However, this bill may not stand for much longer. Legislation that would redefine bestiality to include all inter-species sexual activity was introduced to Parliament, but as of June 2016, remains in its early stages. Camille Labchuk, executive director of the Animal Justice group, urged lawmakers to quickly pass the bill:

> "People who sexually abuse animals are sometimes linked to sexually abusing children as well, as the accused did in this case," she said. "That's a really good reason parliament needs to act."

Whether or not the bill passes, bestiality has not been legalized in Canada, and it's extremely unlikely that it will ever be.

Last updated: 10 June 2016

Originally published: 10 June 2016

Featured Image:Wikipedia

Dan Evon

Urban Legends Reference Pages © 1995-2016 by snopes.com

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Model 'possessed by cannibal ghost' demands PIG BLOOD live on TV

express.co.uk

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Model 'possessed by cannibal ghost' demands PIG BLOOD live on TV

A THAI model shocked thousands watching her live interview when she suddenly announced a cannibal spirit had taken over her body and threatened to eat her insides.

By Oli Smith
PUBLISHED: 09:40, Mon, Jul 11, 2016 | UPDATED: 11:03, Mon, Jul 11, 2016

Thippawan Chaphupuang was transformed under the powers of a supposed 'demonic possession'.

During the eerie television interview, the shrieking woman's voice became distorted and she demanded the host bring her pig blood.

The Thai actress and model had earlier told the TV show she was often visited by an evil cannibalistic ghost known only as 'Pop'.



THAICH8

Model 'possessed by cannibal ghost' demands PIG BLOOD live on TV

The dramatic announcement shocked the thousands who were watching the show on Thai Channel 8.

She told the host that on occasion she would suddenly become "taken over" by a malevolent spirit ever since a bizarre 'possession' during a holiday last year.

Seconds after the announcement she began to writhe on the sofa and appeared to shriek in agony around the studio.

The woman, speaking as the ghost, told the TV host that 'Pop' called for pig blood and threatened to eat her insides.

She said the sinister spirit had chosen to eat her because she was pretty.

During the interview, she yelled: "I'm hungry. I wanna eat her. Her body is beautiful. I want to eat it. I want blood!"

She also says that "someone had sent" the cannibal ghost to earth.

The shrieking and strange noise becomes worse when the host tries to place a Buddhist talisman necklace around her.

The announcement shocked the thousands who were watching the show

Pop is a cannibalistic spirit within Thai folklore which is said to inhabit the bodies of young women and tries to feed on the intestines of those it possesses.

The spirit has been linked to sudden or mysterious deaths in the country.

The woman then recovers from her so-called possession following the talisman intervention.



THAICH8

The footage has since gone viral after receiving millions of views in the past week.

However, many suggested the model was acting rather than actually possessed.

Some said the timing of the 'sudden' possession was too well coordinated to take place on live television as if she is overtaken by the evil spirit on cue.

One person commented on the YouTube video: "If I was the host, I'd bring animal's blood and intestines in front of her. See if she'd eat it."

5 Comments
15 hours ago
SpeedKing
Er, cannibals and pig's blood. Is she a pig then?
16 hours ago
The Inconvenient Truth
Mental illness is the most likely explanation.
17 hours ago
stuartlee76
Holly and Philip would love to get her on knowing their show.
17 hours ago
Ivor Koph
Nothing special. Every secondary school now has around half a dozen possessed individuals in every year group these days.

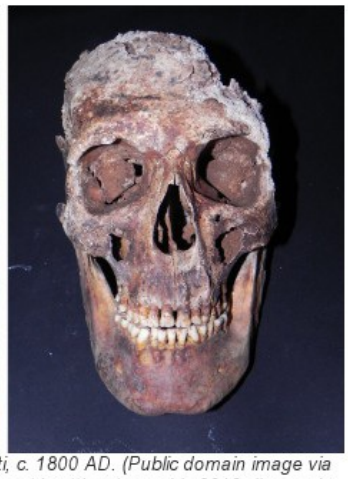
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How Castration And Opera Changed The Skeleton Of 19th Century Singer Pacchierotti - Forbes

forbes.com

Kristina Killgrove

Left: Oil painting of Gaspare Pacchierotti, c. 1800 AD. (Public domain image via Wikimedia Commons.). Right: Skull of Pacchierotti, exhumed in 2013. (Image by Zanatta et al. 2016 in Nature Scientific Reports, used under a CC-BY 4.0 license.)

The skeleton of Gaspare Pacchierotti, a famous 19th century male mezzo-soprano, was exhumed so that researchers could study the effects that castration had on his body. But their analysis found that the physical act of being a professional opera singer also resulted in changes to Pacchierotti's skeleton.

Historical information about the man's early life is spotty, but he was born in 1740 and castrated before he was 12 years old, to preserve his young male voice. From his debut at 19 to his retirement at 53, Pacchierotti was one of the most well-known and sought-after opera singers of the time.

Writing today in Nature's *Scientific Reports*, a team of researchers at the University of Padua (Italy) explain their anthropological and medical assessment of the skeleton, which was exhumed from a grave marked with a headstone bearing Pacchierotti's name. Using forensic archaeological techniques, as well as CT analysis and x-ray microtomography (XMT), the team, led by Alberto Zanatta, found evidence not only of castration but also of Paccherotti's occupation as an opera singer.

Castrati are usually quite tall, as a result of delayed fusion of the long bones of the legs, and Zanatta and colleagues found that Pacchierotti was likely about 6'3" in height. This delayed fusion is also evident in Pacchierotti's hip bone, which preserves the line of fusion at the iliac crest. Additionally, *castrati* tend to be affected by osteoporosis at a young age owing to the decrease in bone mineral density as a result of the change in hormones. The team found that Pacchierotti's lumbar spine had several fractures, and that his leg and arm bones had low bone density, all related to osteoporosis. These anatomical abnormalities can be chalked up to castration's effect on the skeleton.

On further examination of Pacchierotti's skeleton and the medical literature, Zanatta and colleagues identified three skeletal anomalies that may be the result of singing opera.



First, "we discovered modifications in the insertion of three important respiratory muscles: scalenus posterior, serratus anterior, and serratus posterior superior," they write in their article. These muscles lift the ribs and aid in respiration and inspiration. The changes in Pacchierotti are equivalent to those found in a study of modern professional opera singers.

The second anomaly is in the shoulder joint. Both shoulder blades had marks indicating a strong triceps brachii muscle which, the researchers write, "acts on the shoulder joint and is involved in retroversion and adduction of the arm." Pacchierotti, they believe, was using his arms a lot during performances.

And finally, the opera singer's neck vertebrae showed signs of overuse. This part of the spine is easy to injure and therefore it is not uncommon to see osteoporosis or arthritis in the neck of elderly individuals such as Pacchierotti, who died at the age of 81. However, Zanatta and colleagues also discovered that modern research into the neck vertebrae of professional singers revealed deformation of the same bones. "A correct

postural attitude [in singing]," the researchers note, "requires the cervical spine to be maintained in an erect position, in nuchal elongation, avoiding lordosis, extension, and lifting of the jaw." That is, the way Pacchierotti sang in order to optimize his soprano voice almost certainly contributed to his neck issues.

The only other body of a *castrato* that has been examined is that of Farinelli. Whereas Farinelli's remains were incomplete and fragmentary, Pacchierotti's body is the first whole skeleton of a *castrato* ever studied. "The lack of castrate skeletons" in the archaeological record, anthropologist Kathryn Reusch writes in her dissertation *The Archaeology of Castration*, "may be due to a lack of recognition of the physical effects of castration on the skeleton." Analysis of the skeleton of Pacchierotti is therefore helping to move this growing forensic and bioarchaeological research field forward.

Francesco Galassi, head of the Italian Paleopathology Project at the University of Zurich, tells me he is "positively impressed" by the research. He notes that, by combining multiple lines of evidence, Zanatta and colleagues "have made it possible to reconstruct a logical etiological-pathological mechanism" for the skeletal changes. While Galassi wishes that additional historical records were available, which could further point to Pacchieriotti's occupation and physical bearing, he says that the study "sheds much clearer scientific light on the skeletal modifications and occupational markers of *castrati*."

The full article is available open-access at: Zanatta, A., et al. 2016. Occupational markers and pathology of the castrato singer Gaspare Pacchierotti (1740-1821). *Scientific Reports* 6, 28463, doi: 10.1038/srep28463.

Kristina Killgrove is a bioarchaeologist at the University of West Florida. For more osteology news, follow her on Twitter (@DrKillgrove) or like her Facebook page Powered by Osteons.

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'The Cat in the Hat' announces presidential run at Dr. Seuss' childhood home

upi.com

By Ben Hooper | July 27, 2016 at 12:16 PM
Follow @oddnewsupi



The Cat in the Hat announces his presidential campaign outside Dr. Seuss' childhood home in Springfield, Mass. Screenshot: MassLive/YouTube

SPRINGFIELD, Mass., July 27 (UPI) -- The Cat in the Hat made a public appearance in front of Dr. Seuss' childhood home in Massachusetts to announce his candidacy for president.

The Cat appeared Tuesday morning outside the Springfield home where the children's author -- born Theodor Geisel -- grew up alongside his "running mates," Thing 1 and Thing 2; his "campaign manager," Dr. Seuss Enterprises President Susan Brandt; Sen. James Welch, D-West Springfield; and Springfield City Council President Michael Fenton.

Brandt, speaking on the Cat's behalf, responded to a question about the fictional character releasing his tax returns by saying the anthropomorphic feline "will be fully transparent."

Brandt said the Cat is running as an independent and will be seeking cabinet members who can speak in rhyme.

The campaign's official website, catinhatforprez.com, allows children to vote on the Cat's platform.

Potential themes for the campaign include education, ocean conservation, preserving the environment, fighting hunger and kindness.

Welsh offered the cat his enthusiastic endorsement.

"This is an opportunity for us to recognize the wonder and the pride we have in Springfield for being the home of Dr. Seuss," Welch said.

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Catholic Swedish doctor 'tried to convert patients'

14 July

thelocal.se

The Local

The Local · 14 Jul 2016, 11:52

Published: 14 Jul 2016 11:52 GMT+02:00

A Swedish doctor has been accused of denying one of his patients antibiotics when he refused to join the Catholic Church.

According to a report by public broadcaster SVT, the man was forced to leave his job as a locum doctor at a practice run by the local authority in southern Sweden, Region Skåne.

Bosses at the GP surgery reported him after it emerged he had filled his room with religious symbols, music stands and hymn books.

He was also accused of having tried to talk his patients into joining the Catholic Church – denying one antibiotics when they refused.

Another patient claimed they had been prescribed turmeric and vitamins to cure their inflamed sweat glands, which only improved after antibiotics were later prescribed.

In the report cited by SVT, the head of the GP surgery wrote that the man had shown no inclination of changing his behaviour. Instead it had escalated, with the doctor referring to “spiritual experiences”.

However, after leaving the position he was offered work at privately-owned health care company Capio. Its head doctor Stefan Bremberg told SVT on Thursday that they had not been aware about the allegations against the man, but would now launch an inquiry.

The Local Europe AB
Östgötagatan 12
116 25 Stockholm
Sweden

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CAUTION TO THE READER

BEFORE reading the contents of this book,—

PLEASE NOTE.

1.—*That the narratives printed in these pages had better not be read by any one of tender years, of morbid excitability, or of excessively nervous temperament.*

2.—*That the latest students of the subject concur in the solemn warning addressed in the Sacred Writings to those who have dealings with familiar spirits, or who expose themselves to the horrible consequences of possession.*

3.—*That as the latent possibilities of our complex personality are so imperfectly understood, all experimenting in hypnotism, spiritualism, etc., excepting in the most careful and reverent spirit, by the most level-headed persons, had much better be avoided.*

THIS CAUTION is printed here at the suggestion of *Catholics*, *Theosophists*, and *Spiritualists*, who declare themselves to be profoundly convinced of its *necessity*.

14:44, 15 Jun 2016 Updated 14:45, 15 Jun 2016 By Carmella de Lucia chesterchronicle.co.uk

Who is the mysterious hooded figure that roams Chester at night?



Kat Hannon

The strange hooded figure on the Rows in Chester

A mysterious hooded figure has been spotted roaming the streets of Chester at night for months now, but nobody seems any the wiser about who it could be.

Dubbed 'the Plague Doctor', the eerie figure has been seen numerous times all over the city, usually at night.

Whoever it is doesn't speak or make a sound, and simply wanders the streets silently.



Kat Hannon

A mysterious hooded figure has been spotted roaming through Chester

They have caused quite the stir in Chester, as many people have taken to social media to ask who might be behind the cloak.

Can anybody explain the appearance of a plague doctor in Chester over the last few days?

— Chester Culture (@ChesterCulture) March 4, 2016

Has anyone seen a plague doctor walking the #Chester Rows at night? #SpookyChester

— Anna Mackenzie (@DrAnnaMack) June 7, 2016

Some suggested it could be Darth Vader in a rain mac, others said it might be Batman. But the figure has most often been referred to as a Plague Doctor - which was a common sight in Britain during the 16th and 17th centuries.

When great epidemics of plague hit towns and cities in the UK, the plague doctors would use walking sticks to examine patients from a distance.

Can you shed any light on the story behind the hooded figure? Let us know in the comments

Comments
(3)
1 day ago
Gazzy555

It's me high on alcohol beverages looking for my invisible cat.
3 days ago
johnVhughes
Obviously the hooded figure is a "anonymous" member who suffers insommia :-)
4 days ago
AndrewHarvey
SCP-049

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Children possessed by 200 demons 'levitated'

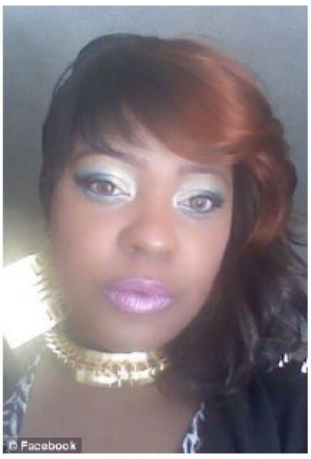
14:13 EST, 27 January 2014 | dailymail.co.uk

Daily Mail .com
MailOnline US - news, sport, celebrity, science and health stories

Police and medical staff document America's real-life possession: Official reports claim boy, nine, walked backwards up hospital wall and police captain was too scared to enter family's 'haunted' house

- **UPDATE EXCLUSIVE: Listen to the spine-tingling voice of a 'demon' recorded by utterly convinced police chief and priest at the haunted house**
- **Latoya Ammons moved into a home with her mother and 3 children in Gary, Indiana in 2011 and started hearing footsteps in the basement**
- **Over time, she and her children, aged 12, 9 and 8, became 'possessed'; their eyes would bulge, they'd shake and growl**
- **A clairvoyant said the home was haunted by 200 demons**
- **Sons were taken to hospital after one was inexplicably thrown in the house - while there a nurse and a CPS worker saw him walk backwards up a wall**
- **A veteran police chief became too afraid to enter the home at night**
- **A Catholic priest carried out exorcisms on Ammons**

By Lydia Warren



Haunted: Latoya Ammons, pictured, underwent exorcisms after she was 'possessed by demons'

A nine-year-old boy walked backwards up a wall and ceiling as startled medical staff looked on after his mother claimed he and his two siblings had been possessed by demons, according to official reports.

The unlikely-sounding event was detailed in official documents after a child services case worker and a nurse both said they saw the boy 'glide' backwards on the floor, wall and ceiling.

Both were shocked to see the boy apparently float after their mother had been subject to months of scepticism when she claimed her home in Gary, Indiana, was haunted and all three of her children were possessed by demons.
Listen to exclusive audio of the demon here

Latoya Ammons said her 12-year-old daughter also levitated in the home, and all three of her children showed signs of being possessed including 'evil' smiles and unnaturally deep voices, according to the Indianapolis Star.

Miss Ammons' home was officially exorcised by a catholic priest who said the ceremonies were officially authorized by the Diocese of Gary.

Police also observed strange goings on at the house and a captain of the city's force has said he 'is a true believer' that the house is haunted.

After a string of apparent paranormal events at the house hardened police officers - including the local captain - even declared themselves too frightened to stay there after nightfall and numerous city officials refused to go to the property.

Mother-of-three Ms Ammons, 32, said she was only rid of the spirits that haunted her family's home in Gary after she moved away and underwent multiple exorcisms and police dug under the house to check for graves.

The Indianapolis Star obtained hundreds of pages of official documents and carried out more than a dozen interviews with police, the Department of Child Services, psychologists, relatives and a priest to uncover the bizarre details - which seem like something straight out of a horror movie.



Eerie: Cops and child protection workers were also spooked during visits to the home in Gary, Indiana (pictured). In this image, a figure appears in a window, right, although no one was home

What is it? A close-up of the image shows the cloudy white figure in the window of the home

Gary Police Captain Charles Austin told the paper that he had initially be skeptical of the family's claims, but after conducting interviews and visiting the home, he now admits: 'I am a believer.'

The story began when the Ammons family - Latoya, her mother, Rosa Campbell, and three children - moved into the rental house on Carolina Street in November 2011.







Soon after, they began noticing odd incidents, such as flies swarming the house throughout December, footsteps in the basement and wet bootprints across the living room floor, Ammons said.

But the terror stepped up on March 10, 2012 when the family had friends visiting late into the night. Ammons got up to check on her 12-year-old daughter.



Activity: Most of the problems at the home were around the basement stairs, pictured. Police dug a four foot hole under the stairs to look for graves

On hearing Ammons' screams, Campbell ran to the room and saw the girl was levitating above the bed, unconscious, she said.

'I thought, "What's going on?"' Campbell said. '"Why is this happening?"'

The group prayed until the girl eventually moved back down on to the bed - but she could not remember anything about the incident. The visiting friends refused to return to the home.

Ammons said that she was not financially in a position to move so instead had to endure the terror.

The family contacted churches and clairvoyants - and while most would not listen, others gave them advice to wash the children's hands with oil, make an altar in the basement and burn sage and sulfur throughout the house.

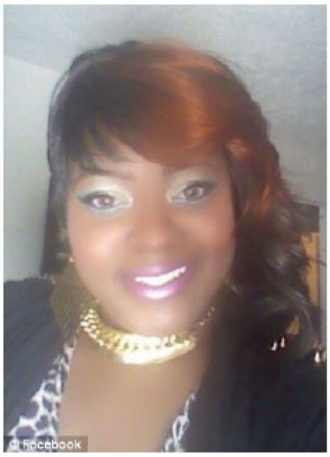
The clairvoyants warned that the home was haunted by more than 200 demons, Ammons said.

Despite their efforts, they still felt the demons in the house and the children showed increasing signs of being possessed, Ammons and Campbell said.

The children's eyes bulged, wore evil smiles and deepened when they were taken over by the demons, they said. The youngest boy would sit in a closet and talk to a child no one could see, and on one occasion, he was thrown from the bathroom, Campbell said.

Ammons would also be taken over and said she felt weak and warm, and her body would shake.





Fears: Ammons, pictured, said she saw her daughter levitating in a bedroom. A nurse and a CPS worker later reported seeing her nine-year-old son run backwards up a wall before flipping over to the ground

When Ammons went to their doctor, Dr. Geoffrey Onyeukwu, he went with medical staff and child services personnel to meet the children - who cursed at him in low voices, Campbell said.

During the visit, a DCS report said the youngest child was 'lifted and thrown into the wall with nobody touching him'. The boys were taken to hospital.

Before the incident, someone had called the DCS and asked the agency to investigate Ammons for possible child abuse or neglect, speculating she might have a mental illness.

While in the hospital, a psychiatrist evaluated Ammons and concluded that she was of 'sound mind'.

DCS family case manager Valerie Washington also interviewed the family while they were at the hospital and said the youngest boy began growling and his eyes rolled back in his head.

Washington added in her DCS report - which was corroborated by a nurse - that the nine-year-old boy displayed a 'weird grin' and then walked backward up a wall to the ceiling.



Ritual: Ammons went through 3 exorcisms, as famously depicted by the 1973 movie, The Exorcist, pictured

He then flipped over his grandmother and landed on his feet, while never letting go of his grandmother's hand.

EVICTING THE DEMONS: WHAT DOES AN EXORCISM INVOLVE?

Exorcism is the practice of ridding a person of demons or other spiritual entities that they have been possessed by.

According to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, signs of demonic possession include superhuman strength, aversion to holy water, being able to speak in unknown languages, spitting and cursing.

Most religions claim that humans can be possessed by demonic spirits and even though it might seem archaic, exorcisms continue to be performed.

In Ammons case, the Catholic exorcism involved prayers, statements and appeals to cast out demons. The priest praised God and condemned the devil and pressed a crucifix against Ammons' head as he spoke. The priest noticed her convulsing and said that was a sign that the demons were strong. After she fell to sleep, he gave a prayer of Thanksgiving.

But exorcisms can have deadly consequences. In 2003, an autistic 8-year-old boy in Milwaukee, was killed during an exorcism by church members who blamed thought a demon was to blame for his disability. In 2005, a nun in Romania died after a priest bound her to a cross during an exorcism, gagged her and left her for days without food or water.

'There's no way he could've done that,' the nurse told the Star.

Washington said in a police report that she believed an 'evil influence' could be affecting the family.

And when asked if the boy had walked up the ceiling in an acrobatic maneuver, she said it was in fact a slow glide that could not have been performed naturally.

The children were taken into custody by child services after workers found Ammons was neglecting their education; she said it was because the ghoulish activity kept them up all night.

But records from clinical psychologists also indicate that the younger boy acted possessed when he was asked questions he didn't like.

Later, Washington went to the home to check on its condition and was joined by three police officers.

During the visit, one of their recorders malfunctioned and another recorded audio in which a voice whispered 'hey', according to police records.

They also took photos of the house and when these were looked at later, it appeared as if cloudy faces were in the images.

The police chief added that, after he left the house, the radio in his car malfunctioned and that his garage later refused to open.

Even more chillingly, Austin said the driver's seat in his other car started moving backward and forward on its own - which could have caused an accident, according to his mechanic.

During a second visit to the home, in May 2012, they were joined by a priest, Reverend Michael Maginot, who had been asked by a hospital chaplain to perform an exorcism on one of the boys.

While at the home, a DCS family case manager said that she touched liquid she saw in the basement and later suffered finger pain and felt as if she was having a panic attack.



Scene: Ammons underwent 3 exorcisms performed by a Catholic priest at St. Stephen Martyr Church in Merrillville, pictured, as police officers stood by. She is no longer haunted by the demons

'We felt like someone was in the room with you, someone breathing down your neck,' she said adding that she later experienced a serious of medical problems, from burns to numerous broke bones.

After the visit, Maginot performed a minor exorcism on Ammons which consisted of prayers, statements and appeals to cast out demons.

But after he says he was given the go-ahead by Bishop Dale Melczeck of the Diocese of Gary, he decided to carry out three more powerful exorcisms on Ammons in his church in Merrillville in June 2012. Police officers were present.

'I was hurting all over from the inside out,' she remembered. 'I'm trying to do my best and be strong.'

Afterwards, Ammons, who had moved homes to Indianapolis, said that the problems subsided. After six months, she regained custody of her children.

The house in Gary now has new tenants, but the landlord said there have been no further problems at the address.

Of the bizarre activity at her former home, Ammons said: 'When you hear something like this, don't assume it's not real because I've lived it. I know it's real.'

NOT ALONE: FOUR FAMOUS CASES OF DEMONIC POSSESSION

Anna Ecklund - 1912-1928 - Earling, Iowa

Anna was just 14 when she was allegedly cursed by her father and aunt - and soon she was unable to be near religious artifacts or churches. She underwent an exorcism in 1912, but her father and aunt then prayed for Satan to visit her again.

In 1928, she asked the church for help and was put in a convent. But when nuns came near her she would hiss at them, speak in foreign languages and levitate. After three more exorcisms, she was declared free of the demons.

Roland Doe - 1940s - Cottage City, Maryland

Doe - known as the inspiration behind the Hollywood film, The Exorcist - was 14 when his aunt encouraged him to use a Ouija board in the 1940s. When she died, he might have tried to contact her this way and it is believed this gave demons the chance to reach him.

When he was possessed, religious artifacts began flying off the walls and people could hear footsteps and dripping inside his home. Scratches also began appearing over his body, which levitated and contorted. His family contacted a Catholic priest and an exorcism was performed more than 30 times, sometimes injuring the priest before they were eventually successful. Doe went on to have a normal life, according to reports.

Anneliese Michel - 1973 - Germany

Anneliese was a 16-year-old Bavarian girl who had suffered with epilepsy and mental illness. In 1973, she began to hear voices, drink her own urine and became intolerant of religious symbols. She begged her family to take her to a priest to rid her of demons. Two local priests secretly agreed and performed nearly 70 exorcisms (each lasting up to four hours) in 10 months - but her parents stopped treating her health issues, and she died from emaciation and starvation. The film The Exorcism of Emily Rose is loosely based on her life.

Michael Taylor - 1974 - Yorkshire, England

Taylor was a married Christian who was accused by his wife, Christine, of having an affair with a prayer group leader. He responded with anger and continued to act erratically, leading some people to think he was possessed by evil.

He eventually underwent an exorcism that last for more than 24 hours and priests believed it to be successful. They warned that a demon may still be inside of him. When he went home, he murdered his wife and was later found wandering the streets. He was found not guilty in her murder by reason of insanity.

Comments (1407)

fooddeserts.org, Newport, United Kingdom, 2 years ago

If you've got a haunted house and don't keep up the mortgage payments, do you get re-possessed?

dordaa, Wa, Ghana, 2 years ago

Fellow Christians, beware, the devil will do everything possible to make you believe that he is not real. Mind those who are claiming that there is no devil and there are no demons. They are the devil's campaign team. They are engulfed by pride and will never allow themselves to be taught Why do they believe what the scientists say? Which of them has ever seen mass? How do they know that the pictures shown them of mass and other planets are not fake? Yet they believe (they must really be ignorant!) Even if there were pictures and videos, these 'campaigners' would declare them fake, anyway!

dorydaryl, Leeds, 2 years ago

Blimey, was the kid who walked backwards and up a wall possessed by Michael Jackson? Fancy him showing up in Gary, Indiana!

flikQ, Bath, United Kingdom, 2 years ago

What utter drivel.

Dr. June Crane, Cockermouth, United Kingdom, 2 years ago

If they filmed it they could make a film and a sequel

Dr. June Crane, Cockermouth, United Kingdom, 2 years ago

I got chills! Looks like a hoax

jcjcc, chicago, United States, 2 years ago

having experienced satanic phenomenon in my life time I can attest to the reality of demons and angels.. having received Christ as my Saviour and loving and living His Word has been my protection and guide.. demons work mainly behind the scenes as they steal the souls of men and women by keeping them in darkness and in sinful behavior which is anathema to God and will one day end in eternal judgement.

jcjcc, chicago, United States, 2 years ago

having seen demonic phenomenon in my lifetime I can attest to the reality of demons and angels.... My born again relationship with my Saviour Jesus has been my protection and guiding force all of my life since I accepted His free gift of eternal life... demons are real. and work mostly behind the scenes stealing the souls of men and women as they ignore Gods warnings of sinful behavior that puts them on the side of the enemy and who will one day face eternal consequences....

Johanna Gramajo, Burley, United States, 2 years ago

If you look closely on the picture of the house I noticed the two mysterious faces on the bottom right of the house

Lurleen Hilliard, Dublin, Ireland, 2 years ago

I fully believe this woman as I know from personal experience that demons do exist and they do possess children or adults. I in my own life had to deal with this with a family member and it was the most terrifying experience of my life, the demon would laugh at me, would speak to me in a funny language and would go crazy if anything religious said or done. It would tell me that it had this family member and to give up, I never did and after months and months of the most horrifying things happening that unless you saw them you would not believe them, I won and defeated the demon. He sounded like Schmigel from Lord of the Rings when it spoke, and if I had of told many they would have signed me in and the person involved. But the strength that this demon would possess was unreal and the way it would change this persons eyes and face was unreal. My heart goes out to this lady and I pray that her kids are now okay, but the Sage and cleansing of the house wont work for these demons

jcjcc, chicago, United States, 2 years ago

I have also witnessed demonic activity and understand completely. Because there is a God there is His arch enemy Satan and his demons that for the most part work behind the scenes to steal the souls of men and women by keeping them in darkness and sinful behavior reaping the eternal judgement that is absolutely and fearfully eminent..

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Terrifying vampire "goat sucker" beast 'caught and killed with s pitchfork'

16:51, 27 Jun 2016 Updated 19:22, 27 Jun 2016 By Scott Campbell

mirror.co.uk

A legendary blood-sucking creature has reportedly been captured and killed by a villager wielding a pitchfork.

The 'chupacabra' was reportedly killed in the village of Rukshin in western Ukraine's Chernivtsi region.

It features heavily in the folklore of parts of the Americas and was purportedly first seen in Puerto Rico.

Villagers say they have been too frightened to leave their homes in case the chupacabras kill their livestock.

The animals are thought to be capable of jumping over six-foot fences and are said to have killed their chickens and rabbits by sucking the blood from their bodies.

'Chupacabra' means 'goat sucker' and comes from the animal's reported habit of attacking and drinking the blood of livestock.



CEN

The 'chupacabra' in the field where villager Ivan killed it

The animal is a legendary creature in the folklore of parts of the Americas and was purportedly first seen in Puerto Rico.

The chupacabra has since been allegedly sighted in countries around the world including Russia, Kazakhstan and Ukraine.

Villagers in Rukshin said they had been terrorised by the mysterious vampire beast for months.

It had reportedly managed to get into cages containing chickens and rabbits and had sucked all the blood from their bodies.



CEN

The local man who killed the animal, named only as Ivan, said he found and killed the creature in his barn.

He said: "The chupacabra was hunting and I killed it. It had been scaring local people for a long time. It was eating our chickens and rabbits."

Veterinarians have been studying the animal's dead body but have so far failed to positively identify it.

Vets say the animal resembles an African fox but have not yet identified the creature's body

Valeriy Dopiryak, the head of the Regional State Laboratory of Veterinary Medicine, said: "This animal resembles an African fox, but its teeth, neck, ears and paws are too long. We can't say what it is."

Another local man, Viktor, claims there was not one chupacabra, but two. He said the other one resembled a kangaroo, with a longer body and shorter front paws, and had run away.

Comments
6 hours ago
PearlVeikens
its a poor little dog who was living wild you didnt have to kill this lost soul,god bless little onexxx



CEN

7 hours ago
Toby
It's a fox and is most likely radioactive seeing as it's near Chernobyl. Vampire my backside.
8 hours ago
snavej
The other one ran away: that's convenient, eh?!
9 hours ago
jackscht
Why on earth would these morons kill it.
7 hours ago
iQuacks
Didn't you read the article? It was killing their rabbits and chickens.
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de aqua

of instruments transmitted for two stamps.

SPANISH GIANT.—This renowned Giant, who has excited the highest admiration in Spain, Portugal, and France, (with the approbation of the said Queens and King,) will hold his levees daily from 10 to 5, and 6 to 9, at the COSMORAMA ROOMS, 209, Regent-street. Stands seven feet 10 inches high, and weighs 450 lbs. Admission 1s.; children half price.

"What's up with you, Higgies?" inquired Mr. Pinkey.

"Oh, jolly; the guv'nor's in France; case of provisional, you know; and we put up the shop an hour or two earlier. I've been to Drury, to see the girls. Ain't they spicy too, some of 'em, that's all."

"I thought you looked expensively got up,' said his companion.

He was evidently made up for a hit. His hat had the glossy darkness and lustrous polish of the cheap silk, brushed as smoothly as the obstinate films of nap, which will always get up and look about them, would admit; so smoothly, indeed, that the diagonal line o junction where the bandbox-stuff or brown paper, or glue and buckram, or whatever the structure was composed of, met, was plainly traceable under the shiny surface. And he wore the hat on one side, after the manner of the leaning walls of Pisa, and at the same inclination. His shirt-collar was small, and his cravat still smaller; it was formed of a scanty bit of figured satin—blue, with tiny many-coloured bouquets about it, such as you will always see men of his *teint* affect—and after going round his neck, was knotted and twisted in some mysterious fashion until it plunged beneath the lower buttons of his waistcoat, its general appearance being what women call "skimpeting." But it was sufficiently large to afford a resting place for a pin very like a huge white currant, which, caught in profile, had a great effect. His coat was a tweed of pepper-and-salt blanketing, and his trowsers were of a large check pattern, resembling that of a duster seen in a microscope. He held one of his gloves, which were buff Berlin, in his hand; and as he half-leaned against, half sat upon, the table, was tapping his boot with a small black stick, intended to look like whalebone, but which certain light fibres, stripping off, proved to be undeniable stained cane. And whenever he pointed his toe, or elevated it, a corresponding projection appeared under the ankle portion of the trowsers, before or behind, which could have been caused by nothing else but a short half-boot —and such he wore—with long, pointed toes, that turned up so, a little more would have made them resemble a pair of skates, or Turkish slippers. And as, in the pride of his toilet, he looked with a patronising expression about the room, he whistled an airless melody of his own composing, to show that he was at his ease, and considered himself quite as good as anybody about him; he did not care whom.



LONDON'S Dreadful Viſitation:

Or, A COLLECTION of All the

Bills of Mortality

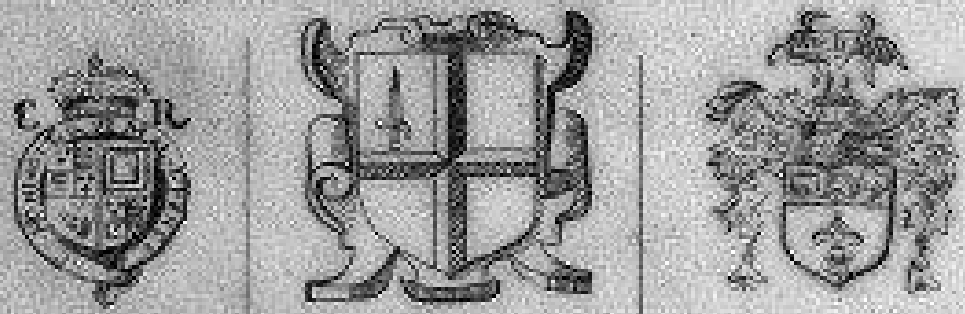
For this Preſent Year:

Beginning the 27th of *December* 1664. and ending the 19th. of *December* following:

As alſo, *The* GENERAL *or Whole years* BILL:

According to the Report made to the KING'S Moſt Excellent Majeſty,

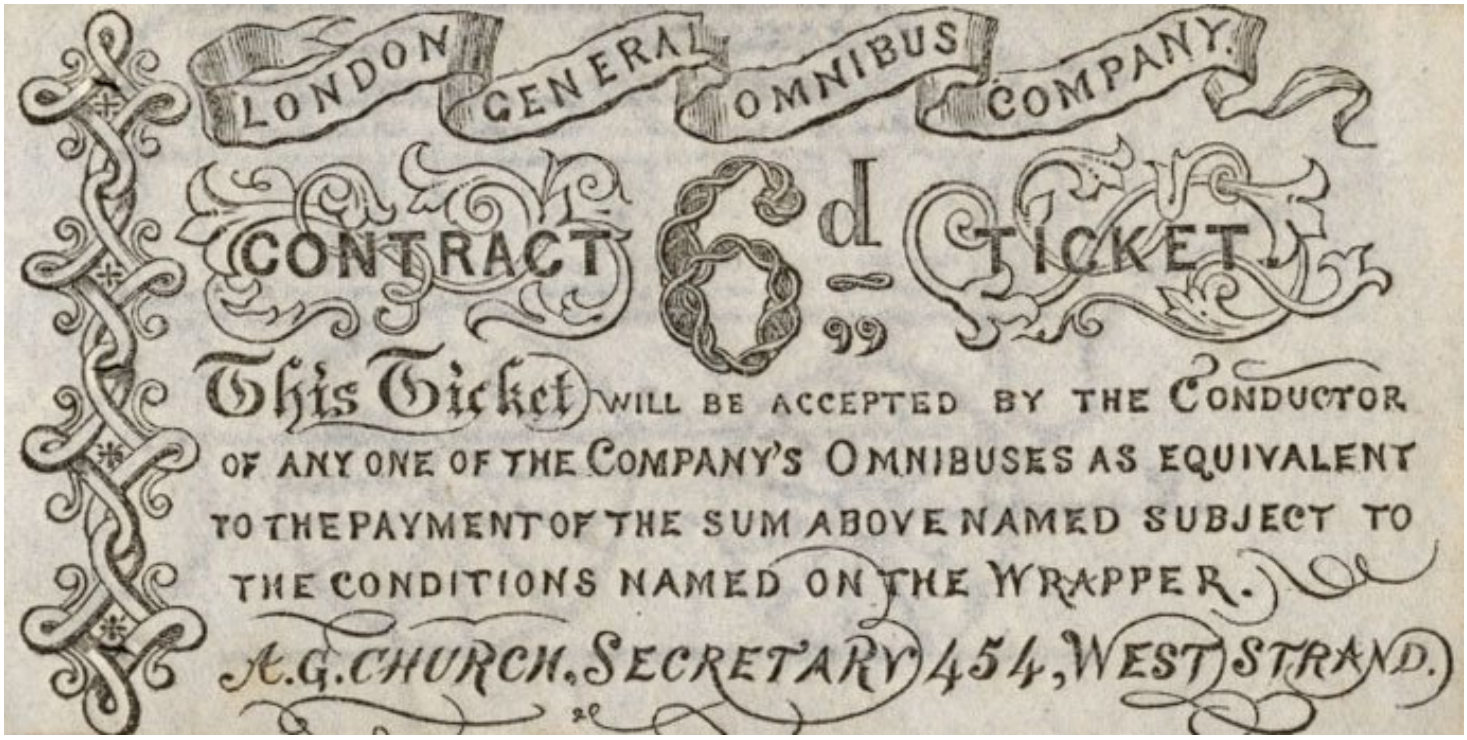
By the Company of Pariſh-Clerks of London, *&c*



LONDON:

Printed and are to be ſold by E. *Cotes* living in *Alderſgate-ſtreet*. Printer to the ſaid Company 1665.

Wellcome Images


LONDON GENERAL OMNIBUS COMPANY.
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6d
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This Ticket will be accepted by the Conductor of any one of the Company's Omnibuses as equivalent to the payment of the sum above named subject to the conditions named on the Wrapper.
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Heroin.
hydrochlor.
Farbenfabriken
vorm
FRIEDR. BAYER & Co.
LEVERKUSEN
b/CÖLN a/Rh.


Vieillesse

Wiþ þæs þinne gif hesie m̄ ðenþe oþþe ō þū lime
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hirtto 7 þroceþisan lege ō þlim oþþrecta hatige
do of þone lege oþþine þeh ō . LX.

Wyrigode aspealpe hundhrunge nibe pearid 7
singrene 7 sinpulle: tunhose niþopeaxid. ce-
þonian leaf. gaþleac. cropleac doō pin ddeōeced
þringþurhhæþinnedad ō þeapre liet standan. III.
niht eh þuhine ō do. Eft nī cropleac 7 sinpullan
genuahpon pinh to 7 þringō þeapre hī bi þonasel:

Wyrcealpe piþælfeynne 7. LXI.

Niht gingan 7 þā man nū þe ðopolmidhemd. geni
eopolume lan. þiþmod bipeþop pyrc. elehtre .
æfre þrote. beolone. hapepyrc. hapianſprecel.
hæþ beh gean piþan. cropleac. gaþleac. hegepiþan
copin. gyhpipe. finul. doþap pyrta ōanpæt ſtæ
undh peopod þringorþ. VIIII. mhþan apyl on
burhian 7 ōrceapþ smhipe do haligh realtherela
ō areoh þurhclad. peorþ þa pyrta ō yrinſn de
pæt. gif m̄ hpileyrelcorcung peorþe oþþe elþ



NO. 9.—Slmpi at Cqgnl. Chgo Smhn at Cqgnl 25th Nov. 1850. Fmqln Eomln April. Elpmo May. Emlhg July. (to Fmlih hipo). Epqig Sepr. ahkp Octr. Tatty Fhknom lpch mlqk in Doql Fmohp mpqn. mqho kiqn to Emlhg 15th. Fogpm mloq. qpl in lhmo lat. ogpm mloq. Fkqpo 2 mqho olhi Emlg. Chgo le Fnhmp mpoh hipo. Lasey Fihkq apmq omnl hipo.—J. de W.

rushed to the table where the viands were so temptingly displayed in a manner that forcibly conveyed the impression that, amongst the majority, there was a thorough determination to lose no time, This idea was certainly favored by subsequent events. Huge jaws and capacious maws were presently seen in active employment. The various contents of numbers of dishes were eagerly pounced upon and greedily devoured by those who would prove ugly customers to an eighteenpenny ordinary. Champagne was tasted by lips that were most assuredly more accustomed to the flavour of Barclay and Perkins's "commingled," or of the sweets to be extracted from quarterns of "Old Tom." The



OF SITTING SQUARE.

"Sitting square," or "sitting wide," otherwise known as the *roomy dodge*, is an elegant method of sticking out the elbows, and widening the space between the knees, so as to occupy as much room as possible, and to make the unfortunate persons who sit next, on each side, wretchedly uncomfortable and close—jammed, if not half suffocated. Reasoning would be lost upon anybody who could do such a thing: the best remedy (next to a dig in the side) is to call the attention of the whole omnibus to the fact.

No right-minded person will take, or give offence, at the exercise of the maternal office in silencing a clamorous voice by natural nutriment; but a public exhibition of pap-boats, and milk bottles, or a messing with plum-buns and moistened sponge-cakes, are open to an unmitigated denunciation.

INFECTION AND CONTAGION.

However doctors may disagree on this subject, most certain it is that fevers of various kinds are often caught in an omnibus; so is the small-pox; so are the measles; and a variety of other diseases, which bring us to the next question, which is manifestly a very important one in omnibus-travelling.

THE RIGHTS AND WRONGS OF WINDOW-OPENING.

Whoever sits at the further end of the vehicle has a right to let down any window near him, though it certainly places those below him in a thorough draught. Those who sit in the middle part of the omnibus have a right to resist this, if they choose; but those who sit near the door have no such right, unless they first offer to change places, and it is declined. Good sense and right feeling can always accommodate matters—only the misfortune is that no sense and rank selfishness too often intrude themselves among well-meaning people.

OF VENTILATION.

Foul airs, vile odours, infections, and fatal fevers—we repeat it—are often found in an omnibus. A close hot day, with a cold east wind, and there sit the packed-up sufferers half suffocated, yet naturally dreading to open a window which would place all below it in a thorough draught—certain to produce colds, sore throats, &c. Now, we shall tell you how to obtain a perfect ventilation on the hottest day. Open *all* the windows, if you like as much air, on one side—namely, the leeward side (all the windows on the windy side being kept up), and then order the conductor to put up his wooden door-window, or rather shutter, at the other end. Here you will have a perfectly airy omnibus, the amount of air exactly regulated by the number of windows you choose to let down, yet without the possibility of a draught affecting anybody. This is the true science of omnibus ventilation, simplified; and if you can get thirteen English people to agree to it, you will be a very clever fellow.

The Isolator

By HUGO GERNSBACK

MEMBER AMERICAN PHYSICAL SOCIETY



The author at work in his private study aided by the Isolator. Outside noises being eliminated, the worker can concentrate with ease upon the subject at hand.



We are ushered into the "Victoria" Saloon, then, without difficulty, except that of a small stoppage for a minute in order to liquidate a small entrance fee. The apartment is a handsome one; the light from the glittering chandeliers is dazzling to the unused eye; the thick velvet softness of the turkey carpet affords a pleasurable sensation to aching *soles*; rest woos you to her ottoman lap of down. the spirit of activity leads you to join the mazy dance; Love presents his glowing cheek in the form of voluptuous woman; Bacchus freely presents his flowing goblet; and, to complete our peroration, the d——l himself or one of his agents is master of the ceremonies! The society you are amongst is certainly *happy* for the nonce;—and now for an incident illustrating the sportive tendencies that here prevail. A very elegantly-dressed, whiskerless youth, with effeminate features, large bright eyes of sloe colour, and carefully cultivated locks of raven hair hanging beneath a stylish chapeau, addresses us, in a tone of badinage, inquiring after our bodily health with anatomical perspicacity. Not only of our general, but of our particular bodily health does the youth express his anxiety; and to satisfy his investigating spirit we must acknowledge that we are in complete order from top to toe; nay in every limb. Not until the effeminate rake has bantered us out of countenance by his intimate knowledge of physiology do we discover the art and blandishments of the softer sex at play, under the disguise of a dress coat, and elegantly cut pantaloonery. We have heard of Xantippus wearing the breeches, but here is a Circe adopting those much-abused integuments. The Cliffords, Sinclairs, Fitzroys, Lovels, and other equally stylish aliases pass you at every step at Jessop's. Some of the courtesans here adopt the names of popular actresses; thus it is not unlikely that a visitor has thrust upon him the card of some *soi-disant* Nesbitt, Vincent, Waylett, and the like; but French names are now most in vogue, and instead of individuals—communities present you by deputy, with their address, inscribed—

MADAME ——, Establishment, —— Street, —— Square.

SUS. SUS.—Puprurayuyruretuturururnun alullulsusrurigug-
huhtut.—Anunnune.

THOMAS MORTIMER.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SATIRIST.

SIR,—As a constant reader of your spirited Journal, I have observed with pleasure your exertions to suppress those infamous dens in the neighbourhood of St. James's; and allow me to congratulate you on the result, and also to express my sincere wish that you may be equally successful in regard to the infamous Piccadilly Saloon. Much as I regret the exposure of men by the publication of their names as frequenters of this den, I do conceive it to be the only course that can be pursued effectually to put down a nuisance of the most frightful description.

Subjoined is a list of some few of the persons who nightly visit this nocturnal scene of depravity,—by exposing them you may save others the like infliction:—

Fanny King, Lancaster-street.

Hannah Davis, the Frith-street Jewess.

Mrs. Nelson, commonly called the Admiral.

Mrs. Spencer, alias Gooch. [The unfortunate Mr. Henry Spencer, who run through an immense fortune, and is now confined in a madhouse, was the victim of this woman, whom he first accidentally met in the Infamous Saloon.]

Mrs. Gale, 26, Church-street.

Cooper, the Flash Tailor.

The unfortunate young Andersons, tobacconists, whom this place and the Quadrant Hells have entirely ruined.

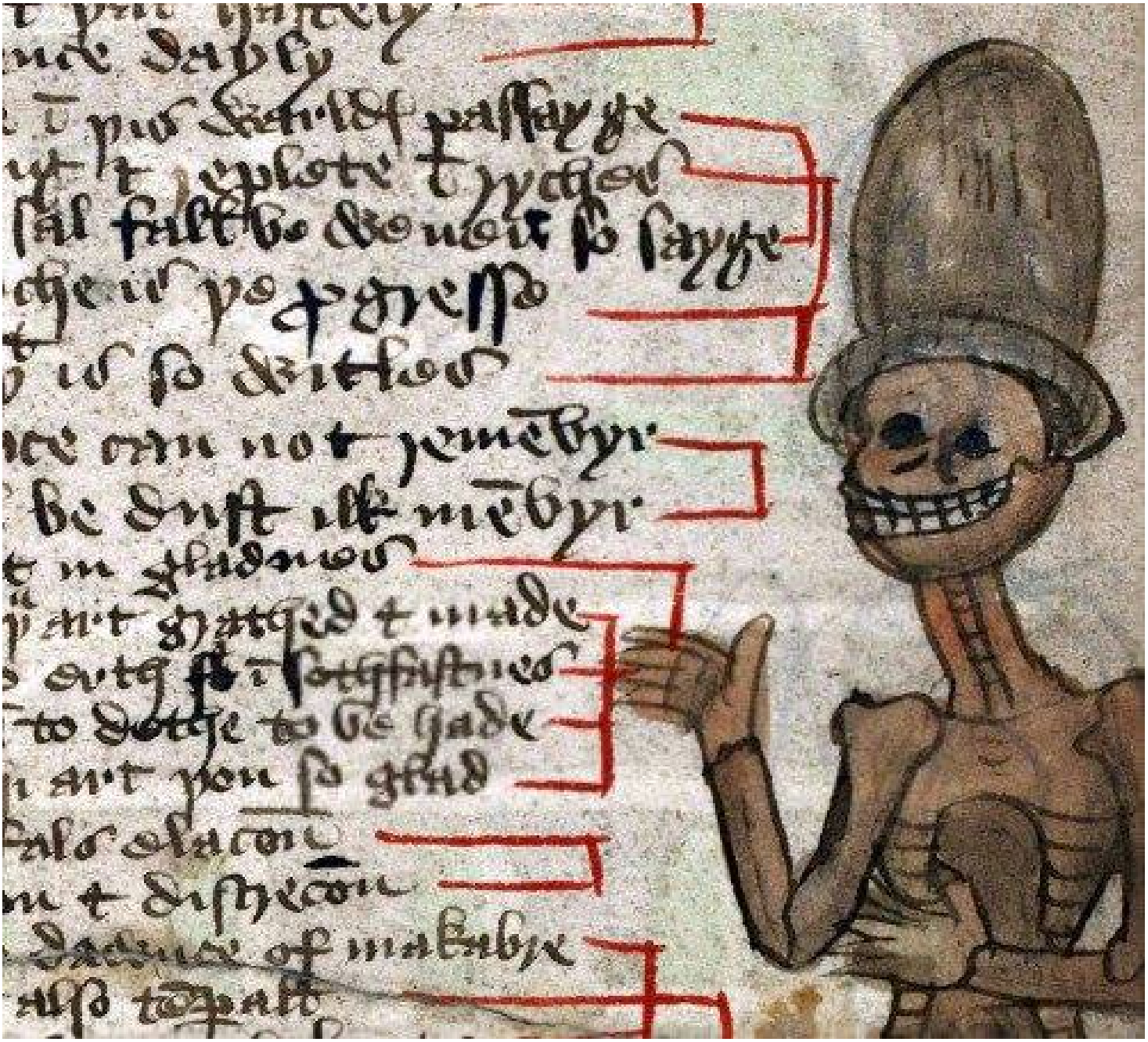
Young David Murray, the son of the respectable stationer in Coventry-street, may date his ruin from this receptacle of vice.

Miss Wilson, of Church-row, Waterloo-road.

I am, Sir,

A HOUSEKEEPER IN PICCADILLY.







UNMANAGEABLE or BACKWARD BOYS, or Youths (up to 20 years), made perfectly tractable and gentlemanly in one year, by a clergyman, near town, of 30 years' experience, whose peculiarly persuasive system and high moral and religious training soon elevate children of peculiar tempers and dispositions (because not understood) to the level of others. A most liberal education, including modern languages, successful preparations for every examination and vocation in life, and every desirable comfort, on moderate terms. Address Alpha, Messrs. Street's, 5, Serle-street, Lincoln's-inn.

RICHARDSON's unique ROCK BAND.—— The nobility, gentry, and the public are respectfully informed, that after a most successful professional tour through the provinces, the Messrs. RICHARDSON will shortly return to London, and give a SERIES of CONCERTS upon their original, novel, and unique instruments, cut out of the solid rock and hewn from the mighty mountain of Skiddaw. Particulars will be duly announced.—Assembly Rooms, Cheltenham, April, 1846.



Wellcome Images

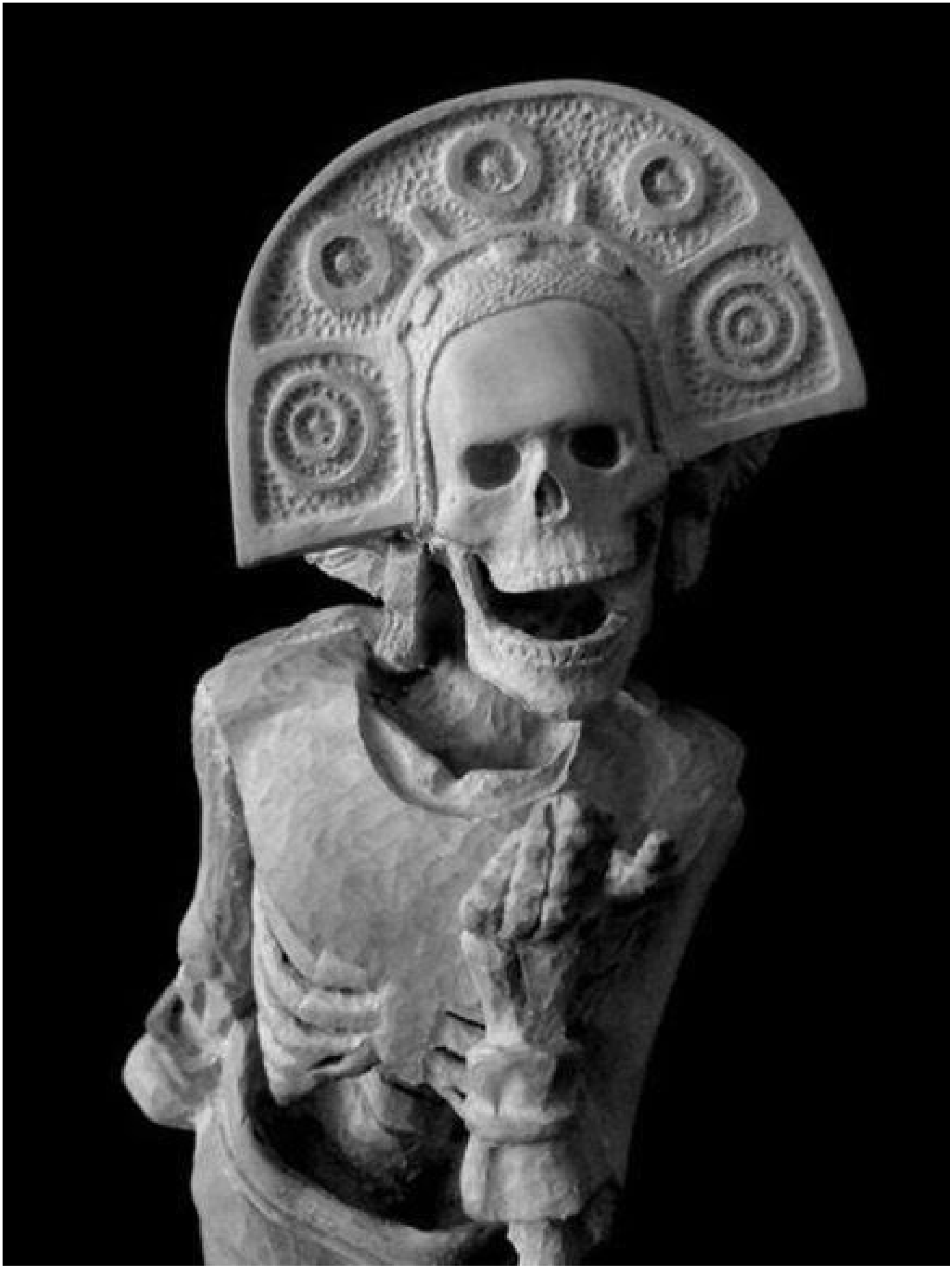
HOTCHEWITCHI to BROKEN PUNCH.—Juva's Lil was chored by so-called Romni-chee-chee Rom-believe No huckabeo. Rescue Lil if possible. "Juva" and "[illegible]omer" both in. Words from Leland.

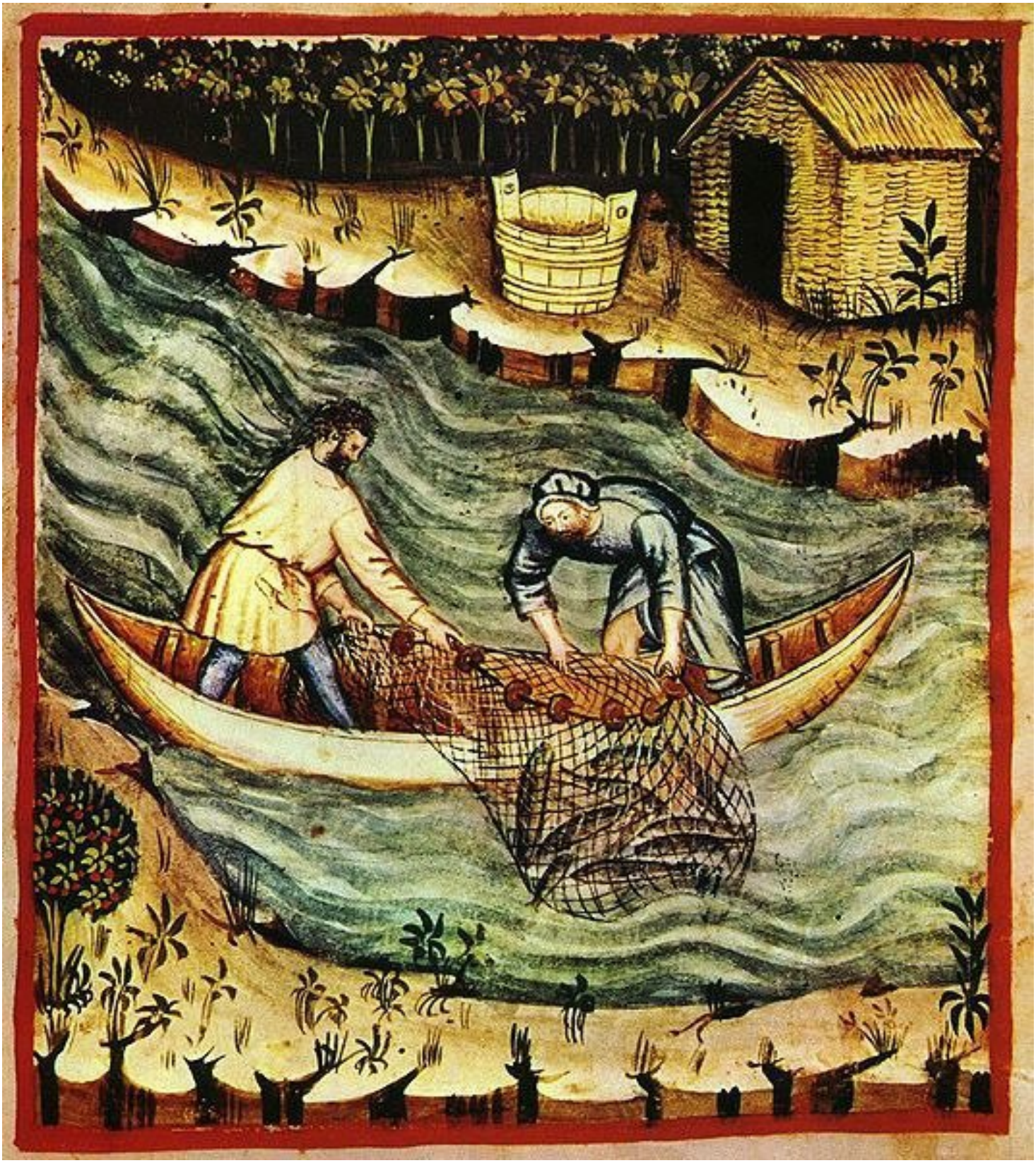


that those who prefer to walk instead of indulging in the luxury of a cab, may take their best boots in a parcel, and change their *chaussure* in the hall immediately on arriving. My own observation leads me to remark that a small leather bag is better for containing the boots than paper and string, since the latter has a tendency to come undone. Better than either are those admirable inventions, the rubber overshoes—or goloshes—so universally worn by the *elite* of the United States. With a pair of these, and the trousers carefully turned up, it is possible to save the expense of a cab, and at the same time to experience the gratification of displaying yourself in full evening dress. It is essential, however, that immediately on your arrival you should order the footman, or other attendant, to remove your overshoes, as by that time you will have one of your white kid gloves on, and will be engaged in a sharp struggle with the other. Do not be put off by the insolence or negligence of a menial; and, above all, do not delay, even for the purpose of greeting friends or acquaintances, or you may forget all about your boots, and few things are more inconvenient than to find yourself in a quadrille, and actually performing "La Pastorale" in a pair of overshoes, and with your trousers turned up at bottom. Only one artifice could save you from ridicule under such circumstances. You could immediately protest that it was a device to promote the amusement of the company, and at once commence that strange figure known as the "Can-can." But what adroitness, grace, and dignity would be required!









the hour for the fireworks, which were a very great nuisance on that account; but the principal complaint he wished to bring before the notice of the Court, on the part of himself and the other inhabitants of the neighbourhood, was the disgraceful scenes that took place upon the occasions when there were *bal masques* at the gardens. The gardens were upon these occasions not opened until ten o'clock at night, and at eleven dancing commenced, and it was continued until five or six o'clock the following morning. Nearly the whole of the women present were prostitutes, and the greater part of them were dressed as men; and at six or seven o'clock in the morning they were turned out of the gardens in a half-drunken state, when the scenes that took place in the neighbourhood were of the most disgusting character, so much so, that no respectable female residing in the neighbourhood could look out of the window of her house. The consequence of this was, that the most disreputable persons assembled together, and the greatest possible nuisance was created. Mr. Jones, a surgeon living close to the gardens, gave evidence of a similar character. He also said that his bell was rung at all hours of the night, and, when he complained to the police, they told him that it was impossible for them to prevent it. Mr. Rossitor, one of the magistrates, said that although he did not desire in any way to prevent the legitimate amusements of the gardens from being carried on, he felt bound to express an opinion, from his personal observation, that these *bal masqués* were a great nuisance. Upon the occasions when they were given, mobs of disorderly persons, women dressed as men and men dressed as women, in a drunken state, were about the neighbourhood, and the greatest disorder was created. Mr. Locke





expulsion, as the case may be."—A will case came before the Rolls Court, in which the testatrix bequeathed £500 to keep up her vault in Kensal Green Cemetery, adding, "my desire is to be bled, and that my body be enclosed in a very strong leaden coffin, and be kept fourteen days, or even longer, and not closed, until I become very offensive.' She directed that the residue of the interest, "or the whole interest on the £500," should be distributed in spectacles for poor English mechanics.—An Irish gentleman, describing in the

services, and their high estimation of his character.—A short time ago, a man carrying a cat, had to pass a dog which was tied up in the yard of a house at Stow-on-the-Wold. The cat struggled to extricate itself, and gave the man a severe bite on the hand. Inflammation supervened, and extending, caused death.—A Greek


Sant Johans turn
Sant Anthoni
Sant Andres

She thinks herself into the future. The bridge is open. Its critics are walking across it, smelling the flowers and thinking it lovely. "And if they hate it, maybe they hate life.

MARLBOROUGH-STREET.

TWO OF A TRADE, &c.—*William*, *Henry*, and *Thomas Beasley*, and *Henry Hewitt*, younger branches of the honourable order of "chummies," presented their soot-begrimed "phizogs" before the sitting magistrates, Messrs. Dyer and Conant, to show cause why they jointly and severally, at various times and in various places, had broken the peace of Louisa Coleman, eldest hope of Mrs. Martha Coleman, the lady president of a rival chimney-sweeping establishment in Chapel-street, Hammersmith.

The Complainant detailed a series of annoyances which she had been subjected to from the defendants; and stated that on Thursday and Friday last all of them pelted her with mud and stones, as she was passing down the street.

Mr. Dyer: And why do they do all this to you?—Complainant: Because we are in the same business.

Mr. Dyer: Oh! I see; you keep rival establishments. Well, William Beasley, what have you to say?—William: Vy 'at I never sot my hies on the young voman, nor never flung no mud nor nuffin at her, for upwards of three months subsekvent to the present time.

Mr. Dyer: And what do you say, Thomas Beasley?—Thomas: Same as Bill.

Mr. Dyer: And what you, Henry Hewitt?—Hewitt: I says this—I never changed no vords vith her votsomhever, and as for chucking mud, I voud'nt be guilty of sitch a dirty haction to von of the fair sex.

Mr. Dyer: What have you to say, little boy?—Thomas: I vos going over the vay for a ha'porth of vip cord, 'cause I'd chopped my top for Bill Harris's box un; ven, vithout a saying nothin to nobody, upcomes this young voman, vot's sworn a werry false hoath, and hits me sitch a rummy punch, that in a hinstant moment I vos kivered over with a gore of blood from my top to my bottom.

The Complainant declared that the young urchin had not stated one word of truth. She was walking down the street, when he came deliberately up to her, pulled off his cap, well charged with soot, and flung it into her face, nearly blinding and choking her with the fuliginous particles.

A young woman came forward and corroborated the statement of the complainant, adding that on Saturday evening the three Beasleys, in order to annoy the Colemans, came and knocked at their door, divested of that particular portion of their apparel which some married females take a delight in wearing.

The "Father of the flock," old Beasley, who was present, here called out, your Honourable Vorship them there Colemans is always hiding my children, and the poor creters can't go vithout me sending a guard vith'em, even for a haporth of matches, for if I doesn't they gets their brains knocked out, vich I can prove by werry 'spectable vitnesses. As for the boys here they're as perfect innocents of this here crime as I am.

Mr. Dyer: That respectable young woman, the witness, has sworn the contrary.


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STAINED GLASS WINDOWS,
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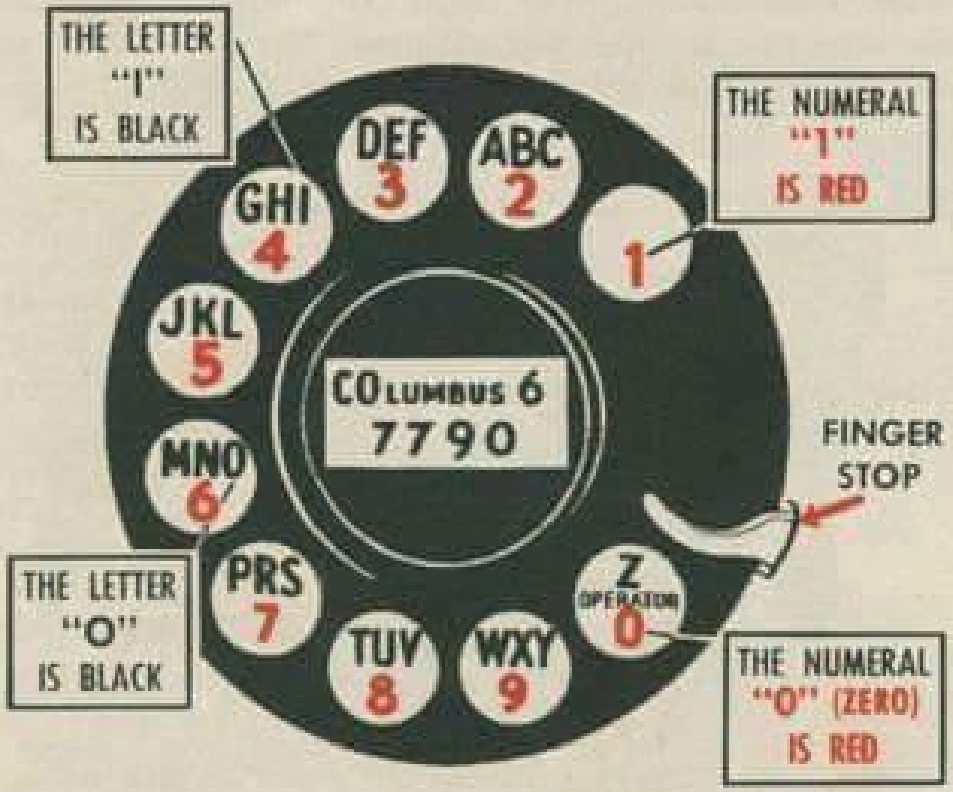

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centre it is today.
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as friends — so if we plea you, tell others or
tell us. At any rate, tell omeone
BEARMANS
The Store with e Personal Touch

FIRE DRESSES FOR THE NEW POLICE.

Wednesday morning Colonel ROWAN and Mr. MAYNE, the Commissioners of the new Police, were in attendance at an early hour, together with several Superintendents and Inspectors, at the office in Scotland-yard, to inspect several fire dresses for the use of the new police in cases of fire, should they be considered available in saving the lives of the inhabitants of houses on fire. The inventor of these fire-proof dresses was said to be a foreigner, but his name did not transpire. A large fire was made, and several of the constables put on the dresses. The outer dress is a kind of wire gauze, under which is another dress, also fire proof, of a different material, and of a more pliable nature. The constables held their heads in the fire for about ten minutes, without feeling the least heat, and also held a red-hot poker in their hands till it was quite cooled, without sustaining the least injury. After several experiments of a similar nature, the Commissioners expressed their approbation of the invention, and intimated their intention of trying the efficacy of the fire dresses, in a few days, on a more extended scale, as soon as the necessary arrangements could be made for the purpose. From what we could learn, it is the decided opinion that the fire dresses will be approved of by the Commissioners; and if that should be the case, it is intended to have a sufficient number of dresses at the different police stations, to be in constant readiness for the use of the police constables in case of fire.

HOW TO USE A DIAL TELEPHONE

This is what a telephone dial looks like.



In some places the dials have only numbers like this.



There are also some other types of dials, but all dials work the same way and are easy to use.

CAUTION TO YOUNG LADIES.—On Monday week, a young female, who had been dancing at a ball at Monkwearmouth, Durham, sat down to rest herself and expired immediately. Her death is attributed to apoplexy, from too tight lacing.

Kirkham.—On Tuesday afternoon the 12th inst. this town was visited by one of the most severe thunder-storms witnessed for some time past; the electric fluid discharged itself from all points of the compass, attended by instantaneous peals of thunder that made the town tremble, and continued without cessation for upwards of an hour, the rain at the time falling in torrents. The public sewers wrecked up, and the inhabitants of most of the houses in the lower parts of the town had the mortification of receiving a very unwelcome visit from the watery element. The electric fluid struck Ribby House, and passing down one of the sitting-room chimnies, made its way into one of the rooms upon the ground floor, dancing along the bell-wires, and cutting them into lengths of about four or five inches, several of which falling upon furniture covers burnt them through. No further damage was done to the premises except a few squares of glass being broken in one of the room windows, out of which it is supposed it made its departure. On Wednesday, the storm again made its appearance with equal violence.

MARY-LE-BONE.

EXTRAORDINARY CONDUCT OF THE MARY-LE-BONE PAUPERS.—On Monday no less than eleven female paupers, inmates of Mary-le-Bone Workhouse, were brought up, charged with rioting. On entering the office they set up a most tremendous shout, and cheered the magistrates and officers.—When silence was restored, Isaac Twilly, the Steward of the Workhouse, stated, that on Sunday morning the prisoners commenced the most violent conduct, and when dinner was served up they called the food and the beer by most opprobrious names. Notwithstanding this, they took from the old female inmates their dinners; and when they had eaten as much as they chose, they commenced singing, dancing, yelling, and fighting. (Here the whole of the prisoners raised a unanimous cry of "No, we did not, you old rogue!—no, we didn't!—hurrah, hurrah!—What do you say now, you ill-looking set?")

Mr. Potter and Mr. Hutchinson, the overseers, said they entered the workhouse towards the close of the disturbance, and such a scene they never witnessed before.—[Here the prisoners again set up a melodious cry of "Oh, you lying old Potter!—There's a cursed liar, that fellow Hutchinson!—Hip, hip!—Hurra, hurra!"] They concluded these exclamations by a tremendous clapping of hands and stamping of feet, which they intended for self-applause.

Mr. Rawlinson looked aghast at such violent and unseemly conduct, and had some difficulty in procuring silence. He then asked the prisoners what they had to say for themselves?—They replied, "Nothing, nothing." "I rolled the old matron up in a blanket, I know I did." "I threw the beer at her." "We don't care a curse for you," &c. &c. They all concluded with a general "Hurra."

Mr. Rawlinson committed them to the House of Correction, but this did not quell their turbulence, for they exclaimed, on hearing it, "Hey, for the Correction House:—Thank you for nothing." The distant shouts and cheers were heard in the office even after they had got into the street.

MARLBOROUGH STREET.

A curious scene occurred on Thursday in the Magistrates' private room. Broomhead, one of the Overseers of St. George, Hanover-square, introduced to the notice of Mr. Conant Miss Price, a young female very smartly attired, who had contrived to add to the population of the parish, with the request that the Magistrate would question her as to the author of the unwelcome visiter. The young lady pointed to a gentleman fashionably dressed, and declared that to him the honours of paternity were to be awarded. The uncle of Miss Price begged Mr. Conant to inquire of the defendant his real name, as he believed the name in the warrant to be fictitious. Miss Price admitted that she did not know who the defendant was. Under the euphonous appellation of Charles Albert Hamilton he had won her virgin affections, and though for upwards of four years their correspondence had subsisted, she had never been enabled to penetrate the mystery in which he enveloped his name and occupation. The parish-officer said he knew nothing of the defendant, having only captured him through a stratagem planned by the uncle of the young lady, who watched her to her last amorous appointment, and when the "gay Lothario" made his appearance, prepared to fly into the arms of love, he found himself disagreeably disappointed by discovering that he was in the arms of the parish beadle.—Mr. Conant. Is your real name Charles Hamilton?—Defendant. Ye-e-s, that is the name I have hitherto gone by. —Mr. Conant. What are you, Sir?—Defendant. A professor of motion.—Mr. Conant. You give lectures, I suppose, on the laws of motion?—Defendant. Not exactly; I mean motion relating to the body.—Mr. Conant. Pray explain yourself. Do you mean that you are a dancing-master?—Defendant. Yes I do.—Miss Price. A dancing-master! oh, Charles, pray ease my doubts. Who—who are you?—Defendant. I cannot, dare not state my real name. That must for ever remain a secret.—Mr. Conant. Well,

POLICE INTELLIGENCE.

MARYLEBONE.—ASSAULT ON A DANCING MASTER.—Yesterday Mr. *William Busby*, a Gentleman residing at St. Katharine's Hospital, Regent's Park, was brought up in custody, charged with the following unprovoked assault on Mr. Wm. Walbourn, the well known dancing-master, at present residing at Mornington-gardens, Hampstead-road. Complainant deposed that about half-past ten o'clock the preceding night he went to the Regalia public-house in Augustus-street, to get his supper beer, at which place he also purchased some cheese of the landlord. On arriving at home, however, he missed the cheese, and suspecting that he had dropped it on his road he went back to look for it, accompanied by his son, a lad about fourteen years of age, who carried a candlestick and lighted candle. On reaching Augustus-street the Defendant, who was on the opposite side of the way, crossed over, and, addressing witness, exclaimed, "What do you want with a light?" and at the same time blew it out, and struck him in the face. Witness remonstrated with him, when he seized his son by the neckcloth, and nearly strangled him. Witness tried to get him away, when the Prisoner wrested the candlestick from the lad's grasp, and struck witness several severe blows with it over the forehead and nose, in the course of which the candlestick broke in half. He then called out for the police, who on coming up took the Prisoner into custody.

The son of the Complainant corroborated his father's statement in every particular.

Police constable 150 S produced the broken candlestick, which he picked from off the ground; the blood was flowing down the Complainant's face from a wound on his forehead.

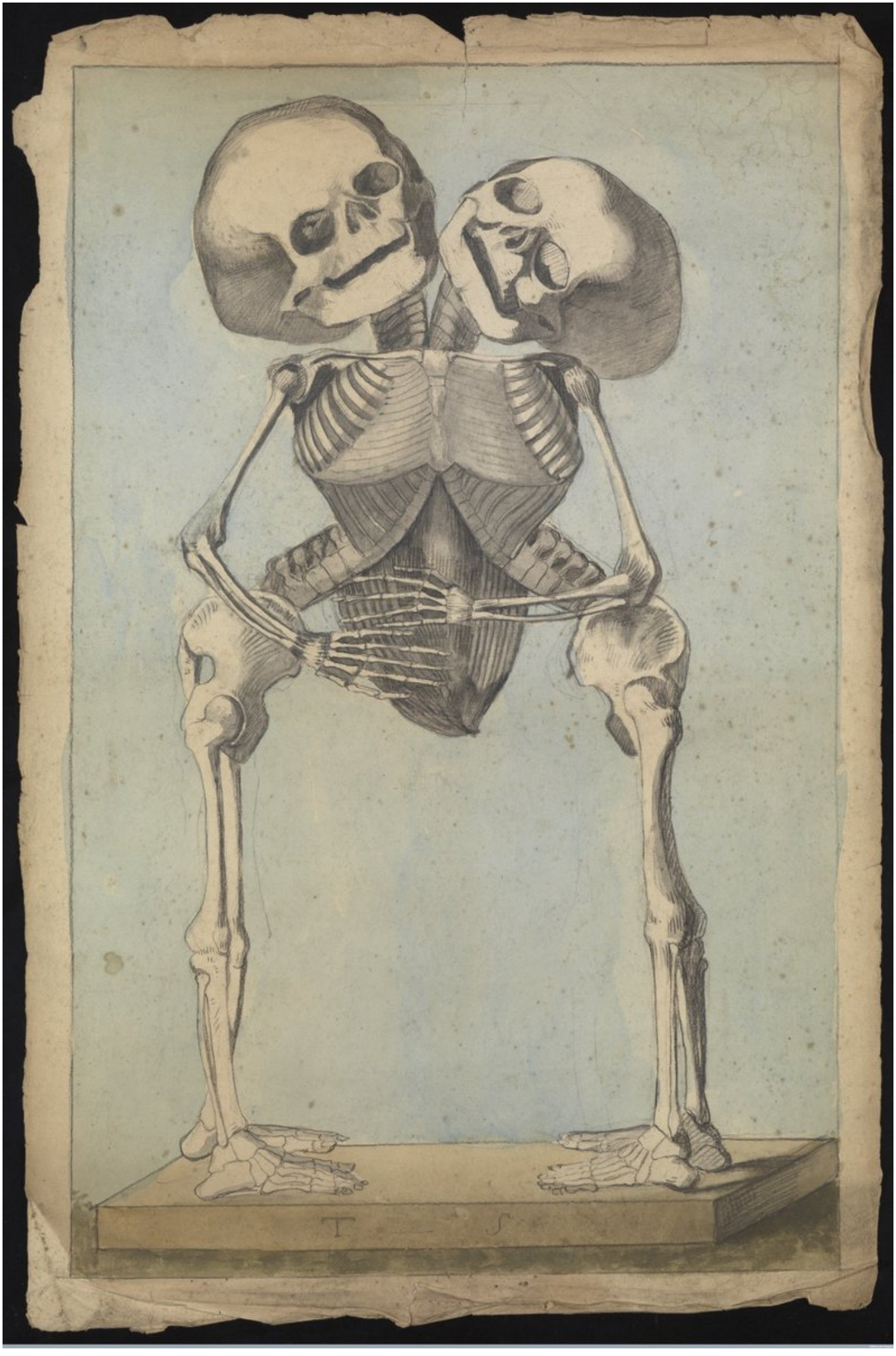
The Prisoner, who said that what had been stated was false, and that he had been first struck by the Complainant, was ordered to find bail to answer the charge at the Sessions.

LAMBETH-STREET.—Yesterday JEREMIAH CALLAGHAN and JOHN LEONARD, together with five youths, were brought up under the following circumstances:—Miller, the officer, said that on Sunday evening he proceeded, in consequence of information, to a small court off Blue Anchor-yard, Rosemary-lane, where there are but one or two houses, and in one of them he found from fifty to sixty persons, principally boys and girls from the age of ten to twenty years, some of whom were dancing to the tune of a violin player. He questioned the girls particularly, and found that many of them were young females of bad character, who had come from different quarters of the town to have a dance, and who had paid a penny for admission, besides an additional penny for every time they stood up to dance. Finding that the prisoner Callaghan was the occupier of the apartment, he had him and Leonard, the fiddler, together with the other five prisoners, taken into custody.—Mr. Hardwick read the following passage from a letter, signed by a respectable householder of Whitechapel, which he received on Saturday:—"Every Sunday evening, from seven o'clock until two or three the following morning, a vagabond Irish fiddler has a juvenile ball, or 'innocent hop,' as he calls it, at which young boys and girls, from the ages of 12 to 18, congregate weekly, to the amount of from 100 to 200, who pay a penny each for admission, and a penny each for every dance they stand up to while they remain, and there is a convenient dark recess where the novices are initiated into the mysteries which lead to their ultimate destruction. Gentlemen, this is no tale of fiction; it is a melancholy fact, and I assure you I feel it most acutely, for one of the female members of my family has by stratagem (and totally unknown to me) fallen a victim to this hitherto hidden scene of iniquity."—The prisoners were held to heavy bail to appear at the Sessions. The other persons, not being reputed characters, were discharged with a severe admonition.—The churchwardens of Whitechapel have intimated their intention to prosecute

sovereigns, besides several flash notes.—

HATTON-GARDEN.—Mr. WILLIAM BOWLES, landlord of White Conduit House Tavern, was summoned by Mr. Miller, Inspector of the N division, for having suffered drunken and disorderly persons in his house on the night of the 3d inst. It appeared that on the night in question Mr. Bowles let a room in his house to a Mr. Jones, who had a masquerade.—Five policemen swore that from eleven o'clock at night until four in the morning there was a continued noise and riot in Mr. Bowles's house. Females, attired in men's apparel, were there, and many of them much intoxicated. Horns and other instruments were blown, seemingly for no other purpose but to make a hideous noise.—The defendant denied the charge, and called four witnesses, who proved that the company were all peaceable in their amusement, and had no instrument with which they could make the noise described, and not more than one or two persons appeared the worse for liquor.—After the witnesses *pro* and *con* had been heard, Mr. LAING, addressing Mr. Bowles, said, you are fined 5*l*.—Mr. ROGERS: I most willingly concur in the decision.—Mr. LAING: This proceeding is only against you as a publican, but you may expect to be sued for penalties for suffering music and dancing, and also an indictment for a nuisance.

MORNING STANDARD.—An Ordinary Case of Extorting



A LADIES' CLUB.

Mrs. Ann Carter, the wife of a hard-working mechanic, appeared before Mr. Henry, at Lambeth-street, to answer the complaint of Mrs. Mary Stephens, the wife of a labourer.—Mrs. Stephens deposed that, on the night of Monday week, Mrs. Carter fell upon her and pummelled her most unmercifully.—Mrs. Carter, in reply to the charge, said that the row took place at the house of a Mrs. Sunnex, No. 1, Ann-street, Limehouse, after the drawing at the ladies' club held there.—Mr. Henry: What do you mean by a ladies' club?—Mrs. Carter: Why, your worship, it's a club held at Mrs. Sunnex's, to which we subscribes eighteen-pence a week, and from which when we have a *draw* we gets 50s.; but the fact is, your worship, Mrs. Sunnex manages to have the greater part of the drawings to herself, and of course gets the greater part of the money. After the drawing she sends out for beer and gin, and the "row" took place after we all had taken much more than enough.—Mr. Henry: This is nothing better than a system of gambling, and must be a serious evil to you and your families, as you appear to spend the greater part of this money in drink, and they must be put down.—Defendant: Your worship is perfectly right, for on the night of drawing we are there till all hours, and through getting too much I was brought here last week by Mrs. Sunnex and fined a pound, which came from my husband's hard earnings.—Mr. Henry bound both parties to keep the peace towards each other.

AN INJURED INDIVIDUAL.

A daddy longlegs sort of person, named Charles Fleetwood, a journeyman tailor, attended at the Borough Court of Requests to summons Nicholas Freeman, also a tailor, for the sum of 15s.—Commissioner: What is the nature of your claim?—Plaintiff: I'm a hinjured hindiwidual; I'm hinjured in mind, body, and estate. My mind's hinjured by Mr. Freeman's bolting avay with my wife, my body's hinjured by his kicking me in a part that it vouldn't be decent to mention, and my estate is hinjured by his sporting a pair of kicksies which I had to make for a gen'l'man.—Commissioner: Pray, sir, be a little more explicit; you have taken a summons out for 15s. Will you be kind enough to inform the Court what it is for?—The plaintiff then stated that he had employed the defendant for some time, and had entrusted him to make a pair of trousers for a gentleman, which he had pledged for the amount sought to be recovered; and when he called on him for the "kicksies" he handed him the "mortgage deed," telling him the money had been spent by his (the plaintiff's) wife. "Upon my remonsterating with him," said the plaintiff, "for having inweegled my wife from her happy home, and then lumbering the unmentionables, he called me everything but a gentleman, and then kicked—(rubbing the part)—Oh, dear! oh, dear! I'm a hinjured hindividual."—The defendant, who was accompanied by Mrs. Freeman, said the plaintiff owed him a "couter" for wages, and he had pledged the "kicksies on account."—The Commissioner said he thought they had better arrange the matter between themselves.—Plaintiff: I'll come to any harrangement if my vife'll only come home agin, and be an infectionate mother to the kids.—Wife: I'll see yer blow'd fust, old cock; I loves Nick dearly, and I'll be hanged if I don't stick to him like a brick.—After a deal of bickering, the defendant agreed to pay the 15s. provided the plaintiff paid him his "couter," on Monday night.



THURSDAY, MARCH 25, 1948

FINAL NIGHT EXTRA.

Sweet Smoke Palm Tiffin

Evening Standard

GODFREY DAVIS
SLOANE 0022

The National Health Bill is out. It will cost £152,000,000 a year

STATE TAKE OVER DOCTORS, HOSPITALS AND DENTISTS

'Free for all'—1948

PRIVATE PRACTICE STAYS, BUT NEW DOCTORS DIRECTED

From WILLIAM ALISON

From 1948 everybody's health will be looked after by the State without fee. That is Mr. Aneurin Bevan's new National Health Service, details of which are published today. It is estimated to cost £152,000,000 a year.

It comes under three main heads: the general practitioner service; the facilities to be provided by hospitals which are taken over; and the new Health Centres.

Publication of the plan will begin a great Parliamentary controversy which follows months of discussions outside Parliament. The big Parliamentary battles will be on the taking over of the voluntary hospitals, and the new conditions for the State doctors.

What you get—

[illegible] treatment by doctors and dentists, and [illegible] chosen your personal doctor or dentist if he [illegible] them, the new scheme.

The relationship between the doctor and any patient to his personal list " will be similar to the ordinary relationship of doctor to patient as it is now known, except that the doctor's remuneration will come from public funds and not from the patient."

Doctors and dentists are to be free to join the new service or not as they choose. Those who join will not be debarred from

Can they stay outside?

Evening Standard Political Correspondent

Under the new Bevan health plan a doctor who refuses to join the scheme will [illegible] outside the scheme will [illegible] but the great majority will have to rely on it. A number of private patients who wish for special treatment outside the National Service.

Almost everyone will become compulsorily insurable, and the [illegible] or a change in employment

FIGURES

As the new health service [illegible] will start, there will be a responsible [illegible] and chief [illegible] the local [illegible] and there are [illegible] committees.

In 1938 the expenditure of £[illegible] on public [illegible] about £[illegible] of £[illegible] was provided [illegible] by the [illegible] authorities.

The [illegible] Service

[illegible]	£[illegible]
[illegible]	£[illegible]
[illegible]	£[illegible]

HAMBURG WITHOUT BREAD

From RICHARD [illegible]

HAMBURG, Thursday.—Seventy per cent of the people of Hamburg have no bread.

They have eaten their weekly ration for a fortnight, and a British official here to-day said we [illegible] to go and share the [illegible] rations.

The [illegible] of bakery workers and carriers [illegible] a bread [illegible] and [illegible] to make the [illegible] go [illegible] bread. They had to be [illegible] by the police.

[illegible] these incidents said the first [illegible] had [illegible] a crowd of nearly [illegible] workers, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]


La tour de babilon
Nembrot



THE WORKES of that famous Chirurgion Ambrose Parey

Translated out of Latine and compared with the French.

by Tho: Johnson.

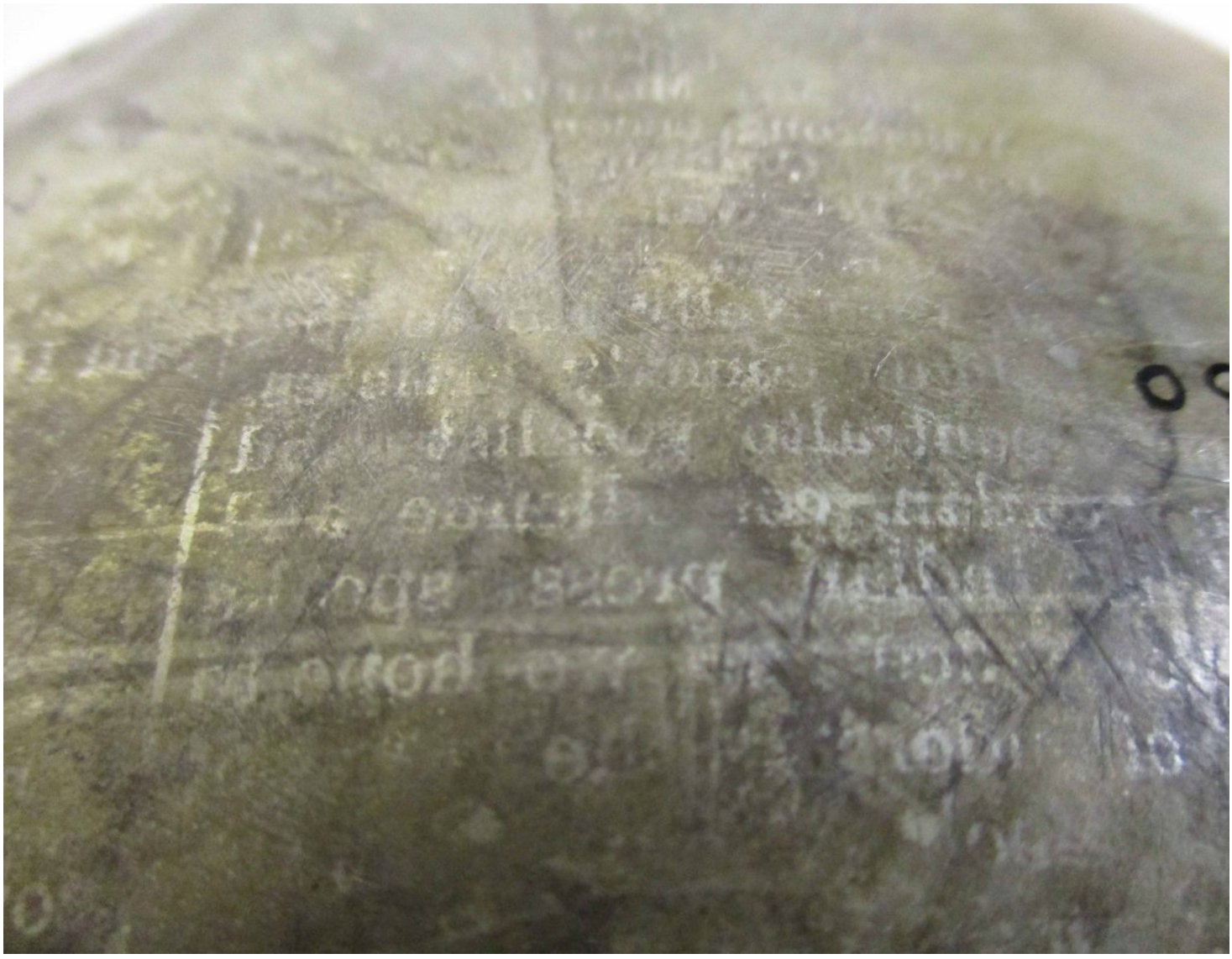
Whereunto are added three Tractates out of Adrianus Spigelius *of the* Veines, Arteries, & Nerves, *with large* Figures.

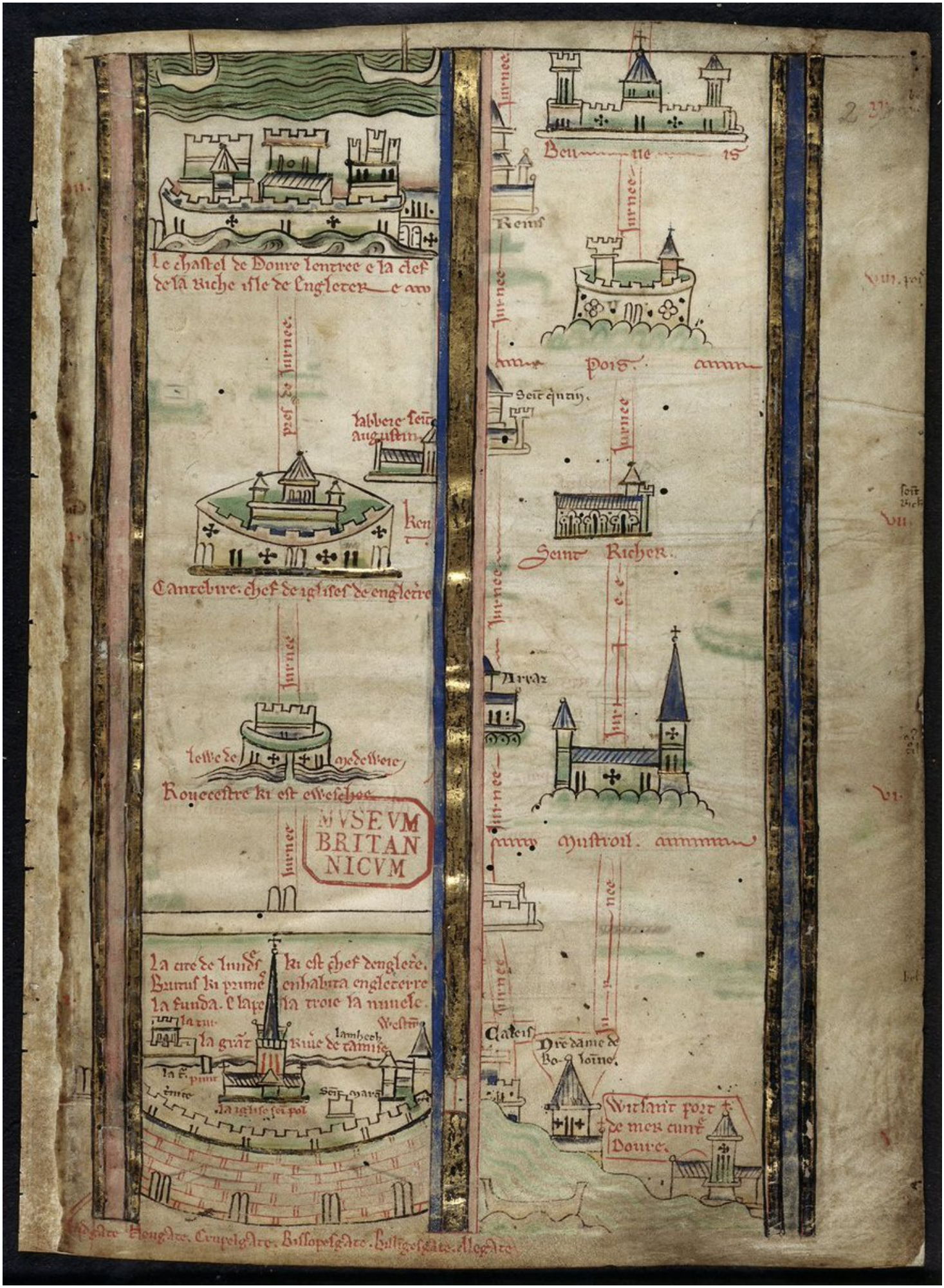
Also a Table of the Bookes and Chapters.

London.
Printed by Richard Cotes, *and* Willi: Du-gard, *and are to be sold by* John-Clarke, *entring into Mercers Chappell.* 1649.




1992.6.130




Le chastel de Doure lentree e la clef de la riche isle de Engleterre e aw
Cantebire chef de iglisef de engleterre
Roueceftre ki eft eſveſchos
MVSEVM BRITAN NICVM
Beu ne
Reins
Seint Richer.
Arraz
Calcis
Dre dame de Bo loine.
Wiclaif port de mer cunte Doure.
Aldgate Houndsditch Cripplegate Bishopsgate Ludgate Aldgate



side of the Old Dock, at a quarter past eleven o'clock, he heard a very great noise in the Ship Inn. He soon walked into the house, and found a great number of people in one room, and two notorious prostitutes, one called "Pablo," and the other "Cottingham Poll," fighting in the middle of the floor. They were all turned out shortly afterwards, and he counted twenty prostitutes and thirty men coming out. Mr. Stead,

LAMBETH.

A Dancing Scotchman.—*Charles Hill*, a journeyman baker, was charged with being drunk and disorderly. Police-constable James Baker, of the P division, said that he found the prisoner on his beat surrounded by upwards of 100 persons. The prisoner, who was very drunk, was without his coat, waistcoat, and hat, and was dancing about to the tune of "Pop goes the weasel," and scattering about a quantity of silver and copper, to the great amusement and profit of the parties around him. Mr. Norton: What is this story about the weasel? Officer: It's a new song, your worship, and the prisoner sung and danced to it. The prisoner said, in reply to the charge, that he was drunk, and that he had lost his hat and coat, and a part of the money he scattered about was that which he had received from his master's customers, and he was truly sorry for his conduct. Mr. Norton observed, that it was not often that Scotchmen were found to act so foolishly; but as he seemed to have suffered by the loss of his hat, coat, and money, he should discharge him.

and duly committed the prisoner for trial.

MARYLEBONE.

A "LUCY LONG" OF THE MASCULINE GENDER.—*James Pearce*, a tall, rough-looking fellow, whose appearance indicated his belonging to the *genus* "costermonger," and one of the last persons in the world who would be suspected of personating an individual of the gentler sex, having, among other unmistakeable evidences of virility, a strong black beard of some five or six days' growth, was charged with having caused a crowd to assemble in the Edgeware-road. Mr. Pearce had on a black dingy beaver bonnet, *minus* a crown, an antiquated tweed shawl on his shoulders, through which ripstone pippins might be riddled, and a blue cotton dress enveloped his *corpus*. To add to the ridiculous *ensemble* of Mr. Pearce's appearance, those precious vestments seemed as if they had been thrown on his body with a pitchfork. On the previous night as constable 368 D was on duty in the Edgeware-road he saw the prisoner pirouetting about, dancing and singing à la Pell (the original Bones), to the tune of "Lucy Long," with some 200 or 300 persons assembled round him. The height of his figure first attracted his notice, and excited his (the officer's) suspicions. After watching his girations and saltations for some time, which were not exactly in accordance with the rules prescribed by delicacy or refinement, he felt convinced the feminine habiliments were illegally assumed. On attempting to take the lady into custody, she tucked up her petticoats nearly to her hips and "cut away" like a two year-old colt. At the corner of Paddington-street her petticoats tripped her up and she was secured.—In reply to the magistrate, the "bearded" Lucy declared it was all a "lark," and had no harm in it.—The magistrate informed Mr. Pearce that it was punishable by statute law for a man to dress as a woman in the public road or streets, but believing that he "really had no harm in it," he should discharge him, on his promising not to repeat the offence.

WESTMINSTER.

The Vermont Character: Coffin Windows

wordpress.com

Posted on June 7, 2016By Chad Abramovich

Logo



An example of a Coffin/Witch/Vermont window, as seen on Route 100 in between Duxbury and Waitsfield.

One of my favorite pieces of Obscure Vermont is a mixture of architecture vernacular, and good old fashioned Yankee Ingenuity.

Do you see the diagonally tilted window placed in the gable end of this old farmhouse with it's long edge parallel to the roof? A lot of people, Vermonters or flatlanders, seem to be flummoxed about these peculiarly slanted windows. That's because their orientational existence isn't found in any other states (though someone did tell me that they *think* they saw one somewhere in New Hampshire not too long ago.) To add a bit more rapturous froth to the isolated mystery, our Vermont parlance labels them "coffin windows", or sometimes "witch windows", depending on who you are I guess. Growing up, my mother would always point them out as "coffin windows" whenever we would take a trip out of suburban Chittenden County to more rural parts of the state, where older structures far outnumbered the new. I wasn't introduced to "witch windows" until much later.

The etymology behind the monikers vary, and can't really be traced back to a materialize point of origin. Going alphabetically – it's said these are called coffin windows because if a family member died upstairs, it was far easier to maneuver the needed coffin out the window and slide it down the roof as opposed to figuring out just how to haul it down a steep and narrow Vermont farmhouse staircase. And trust me, some of them are very steep and narrow to a point of over-cautiousness when walking up or down one – enough for me to sympathize with anyone who would groan at the prospect of dragging *anything* up or down them.

The name witch window gets a bit more on the superstitious side. It's said that an old belief was that a witch couldn't enter your dwelling through a crooked window or opening (sort of like how the ancient Chinese thought bad spirits traveled in straight lines). I know old Vermonters were a superstitious bunch. Our collective state history and folklore include such grim things as incriminating real people accused of Vampirism, or desecrating the graves of dead people accused of postmortem vampirism (our most famous Vampire execution was a man named Corwin, whose remains still loam underneath Woodstock's boat shaped town green).

But witches? There isn't much known on how scared Vermonters were of witches, leaving this as intriguing speculation. However, I was able to dig up a small number of succinct accounts in old state newspapers around the late 1700s and early 1800s of various Vermonters who locals suspected were witches, but in reality were probably nothing more than eccentrics living in a more narrow minded time. One article amusingly reported that a Stowe woman was blamed for making several farmers' milk cows run dry.

A more practical theory and probably the most likely of the three, was that these windows were a creative solution to let light into the cramped spaces upstairs. Gables didn't often leave rooms for traditional sized windows and poor farmers didn't want to spend the money on drafty dormers or getting a custom window made – which was a costly purchase many families couldn't afford. They also enabled fresh air and ventilation to keep the house inhabitable. Though there are far more scolding environments than Vermont, our summers do get pretty humid, and the upper floors of an old house easily turn into ovens.

Further down the line, these windows adopted yet another sobriquet with less dour and more civic pride;

Vermont Windows. Though I haven't heard that term nearly as much as the affor-referenced other two.

In a world that loves things to fall into human made symmetry, who knew that a window installed at a tilt could conjure up so many declaratory ideologies.



An example of a Coffin/Witch/Vermont window, as seen on Route 100 in between Duxbury and Waitsfield.

Obscure Vermont

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Cold case kidnapping, homicide victims to appear on wine bottles

by William Cummings, and Nathan Bomey, USA Today myajc.com

By Cox Media Group National Content Desk

Updated: 6:09 p.m. Thursday, June 9, 2016 | Posted: 6:09 p.m. Thursday, June 9, 2016



Allison Foy

Allison Foy is one of the cold case victims on wine bottles sold by the Cold Case Investigative Research Institute, a non profit that attempts toraise awareness of missing persons, kidnapping and unsolved homicide cases. (facebook.com/WECTNews)

ATLANTA —

A nonprofit is working to raise awareness of cold cases in a unique way.

The Cold Case Investigative Research Institute, led by Atlanta-based director Sheryl McCollum, seeks to help families and law enforcement with missing persons, kidnapping and unsolved homicide cases.

They'll be putting information on wine bottles as a means of soliciting information on these cases from the public.

The group is made up of students and "nationally recognized experts," according to the website for the wines.

"You can’t have too many eyes and ears on a case," McCollum told WECT Wednesday. "The families deserve answers and right now the public is the key to finding out what happened. Somebody saw something, heard something or knows something about these cases."

One of the victims placed on the bottles is Allison Foy. WVUE reported that her body was found along with that of another woman in 2008 in Wilmington, North Carolina, but the circumstances of her death are unsolved.

"It's very out of the box," Wilmington Police Department spokeswoman Linda Rawley said. "We've seen milk cartons, we've seen all other kinds of ways to get information out.

"It's a unique strategy. We certainly are not opposed to it in any way, we believe that the more information that is out there, that we have a greater chance of getting information."

A portion of the purchase price from each product goes toward helping with cases.

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Russians to vote on covering up Michelangelo's David - BBC News

bbc.com

BBC By News from Elsewhere... ...as found by BBC Monitoring

- 28 July 2016



The statue has been erected in front of a Lutheran church

A copy of Michelangelo's David recently put on show in central St Petersburg may be dressed up because a resident objected to its nakedness.

Organisers of a sculpture exhibition in the city say they'll ask residents to decide whether to cover up the 5m (16ft) plastic statue, after a local woman complained to the children's rights ombudsman that it was an eyesore and a bad influence on pupils at a nearby school, the Lenta website reports. "How could you put this bloke without any trousers on in the centre of St Petersburg, next to a school and a church?" the ombudsman's website quotes the letter as saying. "This giant spoils the city's historic appearance and warps children's souls."

Its officials apparently tried to convince the woman that Russia's former imperial capital contained many such statues and residents are accustomed to their state of undress, but to no avail. "Children are around, looking at this giant nude man. Is that normal?" she responded, and warned she'd take the matter further. She was even unfazed by school director Maksim Pratusevich's assurance that his students were "sufficiently cultured and educated" not to be shocked by the Renaissance masterpiece.

Her determination may yet win out, it seems. An official of the Michelangelo - Creation of the World exhibition told the RIA-Novosti news agency it "couldn't ignore the criticism". Under the "Dress David" initiative, city residents will first be asked to suggest clothes for the statue, and will then vote in a 16-23 August poll on what to put him in, with one option being to just "keep him as he is".

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« Illinois Village Takes Down "Bless the U.S.A." Sign After Christians Complain It's Not Godly Enough

University of Westminster Hires Paid "Secular Adviser" to Help Counsel Non-Religious Students »

Creationist Ken Ham Caught Misleading People About Ark Encounter's Attendance on Opening Day

July 15, 2016 (2016-07-15T15:13:27+00:00) by Hemant Mehta <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/friendlyatheist/author/hemant-mehta/>

One of the most interesting stories that came out of Ark Encounter <https://arkencounter.com/>'s opening day on July 7 was how small the crowd was. For a $100 million attraction, the lines were remarkably short well into the afternoon. Check out this picture taken at 1:00p local time <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/friendlyatheist/2016/07/07/scenes-from-ark-encounters-opening-day-inside-the-ark/>:



And here's our own **Tracey Moody** with the video:

said yo, motherfucker build a boat and put animals on it. It was probably just the animals of the island. Then the island sank, he floats off. Actually comes across land that was already there, but fuck does he know. Boom. problems solved for their little tale.

5 · Reply · Share ›

crackerMF ➔ Bridgitte Waltz · 12 hours ago

works just as well if he lived near a river like the Tigris–Euphrates.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/...

it would also explain the choice of mt ararat as the ark's resting place, instead of mt everest.

4 · Reply · Share ›

Robert Templeton ➔ Doug105 · 12 hours ago

Beat me to it, you bastard!! I luvs ya still. :)

2 · Reply · Share ›

earlysda ➔ Doug105 · 5 hours ago

Billy surely is uninformed to think that the tallest mountain was around 29,000 feet before the Flood!

· Reply · Share ›

Doug105 ➔ oikos · 15 hours ago

see more

33 · Reply · Share ›

WallofSleep ➔ Doug105 · 15 hours ago

And all the televised news casts I've seen about it, both local and national, were entirely uncritical of it.

9 · Reply · Share ›

Fromper ➔ WallofSleep · 14 hours ago

Did you see @midnight's coverage of it, on Comedy Central? They absolutely slammed it. It was great.

6 · Reply · Share ›

Notagain ➔ Fromper · 14 hours ago

No spoilers man. I DVR @midnight and watch at leisure. We

are about a month behind. Love that show!

3 · Reply · Share ›

WallofSleep ➔ Fromper · 14 hours ago

I don't have any kind of Pay-TV, so no.

2 · Reply · Share ›

(((dagobarbz))) ➔ WallofSleep · 14 hours ago

I think sometimes, criticism just adds extra icing on what people can clearly see is a cake.

But the cake is a lie...

5 · Reply · Share ›

Robert Templeton ➔ Doug105 · 12 hours ago

You're comparing building a giant wooden boat that doesn't float to inserting a satellite into an orbit about the largest solar planet, Jupiter, which is only about 600,000,000 Km away. Apples and Orbits. Apples and Orbits, man.

3 · Reply · Share ›

Houndentenor ➔ Robert Templeton · 11 hours ago

Yes and only 1 second off it's target. Can you imagine that distance and that narrow a target and 1 second off. That's amazing!

5 · Reply · Share ›

Robert Templeton ➔ Houndentenor · 11 hours ago

NASA or Noah? Hard decision there, eh?

2 · Reply · Share ›

(((GC))) ➔ Robert Templeton · 4 hours ago

Apples and orangutans!

(Perhaps appropriate given the actual U.S. Republican presidential candidate who's decidedly anti-science.)

· Reply · Share ›

Justin Bergmann ➔ oikos · 15 hours ago

He also wouldnt need a keeled boat... Wouldve been easier to make a giant raft/unsteerable barge. He was just waiting for the waters to recede, not go on some epic sea journey - but I guess logic never really applies to these metaphors in their minds.

16 · Reply · Share ›

Chucktech ➔ Justin Bergmann · 14 hours ago

Not to mention, that bulbous nose is a recent invention to help propelled ships (as opposed to a merely floating "ark") lessen the resistance to the bow wake.

9 · Reply · Share ›

(((dagobarbz))) ➔ Chucktech · 14 hours ago

I thought that too, but now I suspect it's meant to represent a rudder of some sort.

3 · Reply · Share ›

Schlukitz ➔ (((dagobarbz))) · 10 hours ago

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/...

· Reply · Share ›

betsey1009 ➔ Justin Bergmann · 13 hours ago

you could have just stopped at 'logic never really applies'

5 · Reply · Share ›

JohnnieCanuck ➔ Justin Bergmann · 8 hours ago

If he was going to use a keeled boat like that then what he really, really needed was a big sea anchor, along with a few spares. Today we'd probably make it like a parachute, but anything that just barely floats and has a lot of drag in the water would do.

Why? That thing of Ham's would have turned sideways in the swells and rolled until it shipped water and sank or just turned turtle. Not many animals would have survived.

A little knowledge is a dangerous thing, or at least it would have been if anyone had had to follow the design the OT writers came up with. They must have just scaled it up from the wind powered river or coastal ships they knew of. Too bad they had no-one Omniscient to advise them on such matters.

1 · Reply · Share ›

earlysda ➔ JohnnieCanuck · 5 hours ago

They have already found several of the anchors from Noah's Ark. Look up info from Ron Wyatt's expeditions.
God bless.

· Reply · Share ›

Astreja ➔ earlysda · 4 hours ago

No, the late Ron Wyatt was not an professional archaeologist and his alleged find of the Ark and various other Biblical-themed gewgaws is very dubious indeed.

· Reply · Share ›

earlysda ➔ Astreja · 3 hours ago

So letters behind your name are more important than observed facts?
OK.

· Reply · Share ›

Astreja ➔ earlysda · 2 hours ago

Read the article I linked. Wyatt's "finds" are utter rubbish, essentially wishful thinking with props.

· Reply · Share ›

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Posted by **Friendly Atheist**
72,424 Views

We're still waiting to hear official attendance numbers, but we do have proof that Creationist **Ken Ham** is trying to inflate perceptions of how popular his Ark really is.

Consider this: Two days *before* the Ark opened, Answers in Genesis had a ribbon-cutting ceremony attended by local politicians, public high school bands<*http://www.patheos.com/blogs/friendlyatheist/2016/07/07/two-public-school-marching-bands-played-at-ark-encounters-ribbon-cutting-ceremony/*>, and the media. It was very crowded, as you might expect, because AiG did everything they could to hype up the Ark before the "regular" customers showed up, and reporters were all too eager to get glimpse of this monstrosity. (We at Friendly Atheist were denied a press pass. Can't imagine why.)

Ham even celebrated the event<*https://answersingenesis.org/ministry-news/ark-encounter/life-size-noahs-ark-opens-doors-vip-guests-during-media-preview-day-kentucky/*> on his website. Note the date of the article: July 6, a day after the preview event and a day before the official opening.

Life-Size Noah's Ark Opens Doors to VIP Guests During Media Preview Day in Kentucky

The Ark Encounter Opens to Public on July 7

on July 6, 2016

Share:

Editor's Note: This news release has been slightly modified for the web.

The Ark Encounter, a life-size version of Noah's Ark in Northern Kentucky, yesterday welcomed more than 8,300 VIP guests and 150 media representatives prior to the grand opening for the public on July 7.



As you can see in the article's image, there was a huge crowd on Media Preview Day.

Now check out this tweet<*https://twitter.com/aigkenham/status/753917184108335104*> Han posted earlier today. He's not just criticizing the atheist protest (which, regardless of participants, received an outsized amount of attention); he's also comparing our crow to the "Crowd at opening of @ArkEncounter," suggesting that there were *so many people* lining up to enter the Ark on July 7.



0

”

Crowd at opening of @ArkEncounter<*https://twitter.com/ArkEncounter*> –compared to photo of atheist protestors–yes, they're a small minority pic.twitter.com/u7aQBiQ4Sh<*https://t.co/u7aQBiQ4Sh*>

— Ken Ham (@aigkenham) July 15, 2016<*https://twitter.com/aigkenham/status/753917184108335104*>

“

Besides the fact that comparing the number of protesters (at some unknown random time of day) to the number of visitors at a $100 million attraction makes no sense at all, *he's using the same picture he already admitted was taken days before the Park's opening*.

There's a reason Ham didn't use a picture from Ark Encounter's *actual* opening day: The attendance was abysmal. It didn't meet anyone's expectations.

Unlike Ham, however, we know better than to take a religious leader's word for something.

All the credit for recognizing the deception here goes to @Ray_disComfort<*https://twitter.com/Ray_disComfort*>, who noticed the discrepancy and brought it to the public's attention.

Related posts from Friendly Atheist:

(My Message to Ark Encounter Protesters)

My Message to Ark Encounter Protesters*(My Message to Ark Encounter Protesters)*

(BioLogos President Rejects Ark Encounter's Creationism While Trying Desperately to Defend the Bible)

BioLogos President Rejects Ark Encounter's Creationism While

(The Problems With Ark Encounter: Liberal Redneck Edition)

The Problems With Ark Encounter: Liberal Redneck Edition*(The Problems With*

(Ken Ham: If Students Visit Ark Encounter As Part of a Field Trip, I'll Only Charge Them $1)

Ken Ham: If Students Visit Ark Encounter As Part of a Field Trip, I'll

« Illinois Village Takes Down "Bless the U.S.A." Sign After Christians Complain It's Not Godly Enough

University of Westminster Hires Paid "Secular Adviser" to Help Counsel Non-Religious Students »

About Hemant Mehta

Hemant Mehta is the editor of Friendly Atheist, appears on the Atheist



Voice channel<*https://www.youtube.com/user/TheAtheistVoice/*> on YouTube, and co-hosts the uniquely-named Friendly Atheist Podcast<*http://friendlyatheistpodcast.com/*>. You can read much more about him here<*http://www.patheos.com/blogs/friendlyatheist/about-the-contributors/*>.

396 Comments **Friendly Atheist** Login

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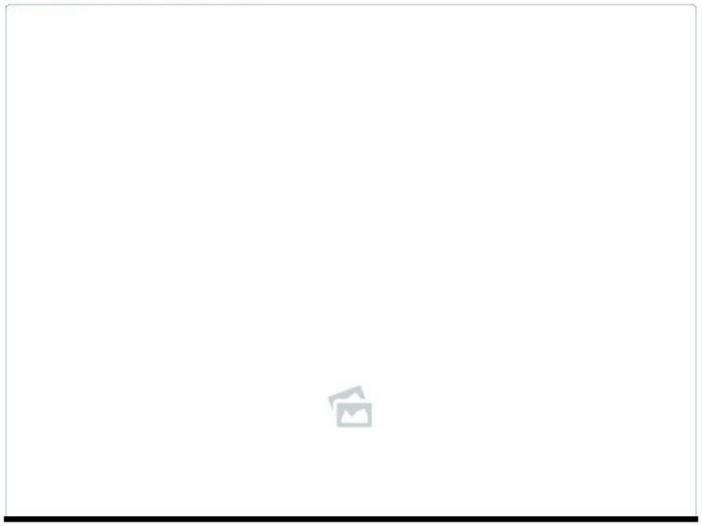
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Show One New Comment

oikos · 16 hours ago

68 · Reply · Share ›

Doug105 ➔ oikos · 15 hours ago



see more

69 · Reply · Share ›

WallofSleep ➔ Doug105 · 15 hours ago

"Well Billy, everything should be taken literally except that one bit there."

29 · Reply · Share ›

Derrik Pates ➔ WallofSleep · 15 hours ago

Don't you mean "But it all works because Gawd magic protected the Ark"?

20 · Reply · Share ›

WallofSleep ➔ Derrik Pates · 15 hours ago

Nah, 'cuz that just undermines the veracity of the fable even further. If god could magically protect the boat, why not just skip all the needless carnage and magically get rid of all the wicked people.

32 · Reply · Share ›

nowhereman ➔ WallofSleep · 15 hours ago

I've often wondered that. Why didn't he just smite the bad apples? If Santa Claus can tell who is naughty and who is nice, it should be a lead pipe cinch for a god.

27 · Reply · Share ›

Rogue Medic ➔ nowhereman · 8 hours ago

Bad apples pick cherries, too.

On the first day, God created the low hanging fruit.

.

1 · Reply · Share ›

The Other Weirdo ➔ WallofSleep · 15 hours ago

Why not just build an extra Earth out there somewhere, move all the good people there, and try again? Surely, an omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent Creator God of the Universe would have sufficient power. Or does that require imagination in primitive ignorant goat herders to come up with such a story?

23 · Reply · Share ›

kermit ➔ The Other Weirdo · 13 hours ago

Goat herders didn't lack imagination so much as knowledge. Every bronze-age or earlier goatherd has been caught in a storm at some point. It's not hard imagining the thunder god just making it rain more, until even the mountains are covered. Problems with genetic diversity, the actual number of animals, archaeological timeline, all the plants dying, where the water came from and where it went, and all the hundreds of other problems just weren't on his radar.

"The king of gods made it rain and rain, till everything drowned. Only the ~~good~~ obedient man and his family were saved!"

What I have a problem with are people who have access to information who are determined to remain ignorant. They have a need for a moral universe, that is, a universe run by a king in the sky with magic. More information just confuses and frightens them. "Broken rocks were good enough tools for great-grandfather Ook, and they're good enough for me!"

Troglodytes.

19 · Reply · Share ›

HairyEyedWordBombThrower ➔ The Other Weirdo · 14 hours ago

The Magratheans were busy and couldn't whip up another Earth...

16 · Reply · Share ›

Cozmo the Magician ➔ HairyEyedWordBombThrower · 9 hours ago

Well, I hear the mice never DID pay their bill. I think they were using Trump's finance skills.

3 · Reply · Share ›

David James ➔ The Other Weirdo · 15 hours ago

and miss out on all the fun of committing mass murder? What kind of God would THAT be?

14 · Reply · Share ›

betsey1009 ➔ The Other Weirdo · 13 hours ago

maybe there is an extra Earth out there with all the good people. I mean, a LOT of awesome rock n rollers passed away earlier this year . . .

9 · Reply · Share ›

Prairiedog ➔ The Other Weirdo · 14 hours ago

He did, we didn't make the grade (atheists, duh) so...Trump.

5 · Reply · Share ›

cdbunch ➔ Prairiedog · 12 hours ago
Do you really think anyone on Earth did anything that would justify inflicting Trump on the world?
6 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›

SkyBluePM ➔ The Other Weirdo · 11 hours ago
Well he tried twice, once for Venus, and once for Mars. On the third attempt, the "perfect" god realised he had to make sure it was in the correct distance from the sun.
3 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›

Rogue Medic ➔ The Other Weirdo · 8 hours ago
What makes you think that didn't happen?

This is take 666 of filming of *The Bible*.

.
1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›

(((GC))) ➔ WallofSleep · 5 hours ago
If that god could magically get rid of all the wicked people, why not create people who'd stay righteous? Why not do things right from the very beginning?
1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›

nowhereman ➔ Derrik Pates · 15 hours ago
...or the other standby--SATAN DID IT!!!
9 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›

(((dagobarbz))) ➔ nowhereman · 14 hours ago
Yes...Hell planted the thought in Ham's head that people would pay $40 a pop to see a fake wooden boat on a landlocked chunk of real estate.

And lo! Ham did consider and the notion pleased him mightily. Meanwhile, Earline and Bubs decided to pass up opening day because their power bill was due.
9 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›

Martin Penwald ➔ (((dagobarbz))) · 12 hours ago
Mmmmmhh ... Not convinced. I wonder how much money did Ham get for all this little financial adventure. I am pretty sure it came positive for him. And probably very positive.
2 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›

Dom Saunders ➔ Doug105 · 14 hours ago
...and boom goes the mic.

8 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›

jh ➔ Doug105 · 11 hours ago

Just an FYI

technically - all that water didn't just come from the rain. It came from within the earth. (that was the explanation I received back in the day)
NIV - GEN 7:11-12

11 In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, on the seventeenth day of the second month—on that day all the springs of the great deep burst forth, and the floodgates of the heavens were opened. 12 And rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights.

7 ▲ | ▼ · Reply · Share ›

Schlukitz ➔ jh · 9 hours ago

Of course, no one has ever been able to explain where all that rain came from.

Clouds (rain holders) are formed by moisture rising from the earth.

How long would that have taken?

Wouldn't that have sucked the earth dry?

And, with that much moisture in the air, the cloud cover would have been so thick, worldwide, that not a ray of sunshine could have penetrated it which would have blocked the process of photosynthesis.

Three major problems with water "springing" out of the earth.

1) Massive sinkholes would have developed just as is

see more

3 ▲ | ▼ · Reply · Share ›

NOGODZ20 ➔ Doug105 · 11 hours ago

Genesis 7:19-20: "(the waters) The rose greatly on the earth, and all of the high mountains under the entire heavens were covered. The waters rose and covered the mountains to a depth of more than twenty feet."

Quite naturally, *The Thinking Atheist* appears a tad skeptical of this account. They said:

This would require steady, planet-wide rainfall at the rate of 6 inches per minute, 360 inches an hour, for 40 days and 40 nights, covering Mount Everest under 22 feet of water. How, exactly, did Noah measure this for the record? Where has all the water gone since? And why is there no legitimate geological evidence of a global flood?

5 ▲ | ▼ · Reply · Share ›

Schlukitz ➔ NOGODZ20 · 10 hours ago

It's all "water over the dam". Hee hee

1 ▲ | ▼ · Reply · Share ›

Bridgitte Waltz ➔ Doug105 · 13 hours ago

I'd like to think that Noah was actually on an island, but had no idea cause those motherfuckers went nowhere. So when their god

Crying the Neck, Corn Dollies and Fairy Folk: Customs and Traditions of Lammas

blogspot.co.uk

http://darkdorset.blogspot.co.uk/2016/08/crying-neck-corn-dollies-and-fairy-folk.html



Dark Dorset Online Scrapbook is an archive of current and past events relating to local history, folklore and mysteries that can be discovered in the English county of Dorset.

Monday, 1 August 2016

The 1st August is the ancient festival of 'Lammas Tide', which traditionally is the start of the harvest calendar: - a time of giving thanks to 'Mother Nature' for all her fruits and reaping what has been sown.

The Celts originally called it 'Lugnasad' and would celebrate by honouring 'Lugh', the sun god; however, the Saxons renamed the festival 'hlaf-maesse' meaning 'loaf mass', which later became 'Lammas', as we know it today. Traditionally it was the day when the first new grain was milled and baked into small loaves of bread, which were offered on the altar for a blessing and as thanks-giving for the first fruits of the harvest. Sometimes this service was reserved for 'Garland Sunday', the first Sunday after Lammas Day.

Music Barrows and Fairy Folk



Bincombe Bumps Music Barrows

The Dorset landscape would not be complete without its numerous ancient earthworks and barrows. In the past these burial mounds were believed to be inhabited by fairies, and at Lammas they are said to rise on pillars to reveal the revelling fairies dancing inside to the sweet sound of fairy music.

On Bincombe Hill, overlooking Weymouth, six such hillocks - which date back to the Bronze Age can be seen They were known locally as 'Music Barrows', for it was said if you put your ear to the top of one at noon, you would be able to hear the plaintive tones of music.

Corn Dollies



A traditional Corn Dolly

Corn dollies are a form of straw work made for, and associated with, harvest customs of Europe before mechanisation.

Before Christianisation, in traditional pagan European culture it was believed that the spirit of the "corn" (in modern American English, "corn" would be "grain") lived amongst the crop, and that the harvest made it effectively homeless.

Among the customs attached to the last sheaf of the harvest, hollow shapes were fashioned from the last sheaf of wheat or other cereal crops. The corn spirit would then spend the winter in their homes until the "corn dolly" was ploughed into the first furrow of the new season. "Dolly" may be a corruption of "idol" or may have come from the Greek word 'eidolon' (that which represents something else) as does the word 'idol'.

Crying the Neck

'Crying the Neck', 'Crying the Nack' or 'Crying the Mare', is a harvest festival tradition practiced in the West Country of England, in particular Cornwall, Devon, and parts of West Dorset.

In The Story of Cornwall, by Kenneth Hamilton Jenkin, the following explanation is given on the practice:

> "In those days the whole of the reaping had to be done either with the hook or scythe. The harvest, in consequence, often lasted for many weeks. When the time came to cut the last handful of standing corn, one of the reapers would lift up the bunch high above his head and call out in a loud voice.....,

"We have it! We have it! We have it!"

The rest would then shout,

"What 'ave 'ee? What 'ave 'ee? What 'ave 'ee?"

and the reply would be:

"A neck! A neck! A neck!"

Everyone then joined in shouting:

"Hurrah! Hurrah for the neck! Hurrah for Mr. So-and-So"

(calling the farmer by name.)"

Although mostly discontinued the tradition is still practised by members of the Old Cornwall Society every year.

Extract taken from the *Chambers Book of Days* August 1st 1864, details the traditions of Lammas.

"LAMMAS - This was one of the four great pagan festivals of Britain, the others being on 1st November, 1st February, and 1st May. The festival of the Gule of August, as it was called, probably celebrated the realisation of the first-fruits of the earth, and more particularly that of the grain-harvest. When Christianity was introduced, the day continued to be observed as a festival on these grounds, and, from a loaf being the usual offering at church, the service, and consequently the day, came to be called Half-mass, subsequently shortened into Lammas, just as hlaf-dig (bread-dispenser), applicable to the mistress of a house, came to be softened into the familiar and extensively used term, lady. This we would call the rational definition of the word Lammas.

There is another, but in our opinion utterly inadmissible derivation, pointing to the custom of bringing a lamb on this day, as an offering to the cathedral church of York. Without doubt, this custom, which was purely local, would take its rise with reference to the term Lammas, after the true original signification of that word had been forgotten. It was once customary in England, in contravention of the proverb, that a cat in mittens catches no mice, to give money to servants on Lammas-day, to buy gloves; hence the term Glove-Silver. It is mentioned among the ancient customs of the abbey of St. Edmund's, in which the clerk of the cellarer had 2d.; the cellarer's squire, 11d.; the granger, 11d.; and the cowherd a penny. Anciently, too, it was customary for every family to give annually to the pope on this day one penny, which was thence called Denarius Sancti Petri, or Peter's Penny.'—Hampson's Medii AEvi Kalendarium.

What appears as a relic of the ancient pagan festival of the Gule of August, was practised in Lothian till about the middle of the eighteenth century. From the unenclosed state of the country, the tending of cattle then employed a great number of hands, and the cow-boys, being more than half idle, were much disposed to unite in seeking and creating amusement. In each little district, a group of them built, against Lammas-day, a tower of stones and sods in some conspicuous place.

> On Lammas-morning, they assembled here, bearing flags, and blowing cow-horns—breakfasted together on bread and cheese, or other provisions—then set out on a march or procession, which usually ended in a foot-race for some trifling prize. The most remarkable feature of these rustic fetes was a practice of each party trying, before or on the day, to demolish the sod fortalice of some other party near by. This, of course, led to great fights and brawls, in which blood was occasionally spilt. But, on the whole, the Lammas Festival of Lothian was a pleasant affair, characteristic of an age which, with less to gain, had perhaps rather more to enjoy than the present"

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Dead man didn't stop cronut fans

stuff.co.nz

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Customers ignore corpse, continue lining up for cronuts at New York bakery

Last updated 10:51, July 27 2016

The cronut craze is still alive and well in the US - not even a dead man could stop those determined to get their sugar fix.

Customers filed in to New York's Dominique Ansel Bakery in Soho - famed for their creation of the cronut - early in the morning, completely unfazed by the corpse within eyesight nearby, *The New York Post* reported.

A cross between a croissant and a doughnut, the cronut rose to fame in 2013. Lines continue to extend half-a-block, more than 100 people deep, at this delicious tourist attraction.

City resident, Molly Young, said no one seemed fazed during the 6am rush.

"I didn't see anyone leave the line," the 29-year-old told *The New York Post*.

"It didn't put a dent in anyone's appetite."

One customer alerted staff who called emergency services, but still on one in line flinched.

It was the body a man who lived in a neighbouring property, who died about 10 hours earlier, according to reports.

- Stuff

Emailnewstips@stuff.co.nz

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Robbed in Rio: Danish Olympic team hit by thieves

03/08 thelocal.dk

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The Local



Robbed in Rio: Danish Olympic team hit by thieves

The Local · 3 Aug 2016, 19:26

Published: 03 Aug 2016 19:26 GMT+02:00

Olympic thieves have robbed Denmark's team of mobile phones, clothes and sheets, and even had the cheek to deprive Morten Rodtwitt, the country's Olympic boss of his iPad.

"It's extremely irritating," Morten Rodtwitt, Denmark's chef de mission in Rio, told Berlingske.

"In connection with the many extra workers, cleaners and housekeepers who have been squeezed into the Olympic village because of our requirements and requests, we have been subjected to a series of thefts," he told TV2.

The thefts come on top of a string of problems with the athletes rooms which have forced the Danish delegation to complain of no fewer than 150 issues with their 36 apartments.

"The buildings here are simply not in order," Ulrik Wilbek, the head of the Danish handball association, told TV2."The conditions are not in order. It is not clean here. It is unpleasant to go and wash in the bathing facilities."

One of the handball team, Casper Mortensen told TV2 that a sink had collapsed simply because he leaned on it.

However, Rodtwitt said he didn't expect the many problems to affect his athletes chances in the games.

"The athletes have been good at abstracting from it. They have been super cool," he told Berlingske.

The Rio Olympics has its official opening ceremony on Friday.

This was how Morten Rodtwitt's Olympic office looked when he arrived in July.



The Local Europe AB
Östgötagatan 12
116 25 Stockholm
Sweden

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Danish Pokémon corpse named as violent killer

10/07 thelocal.dk

The Local



Danish Pokémon corpse named as violent killer

The Local · 29 Jul 2016, 09:48

Published: 29 Jul 2016 09:48 GMT+02:00

Forty-one-year-old Simon Bolt Brinkmann disappeared in May under suspicious circumstances in the same area outside Odense, on the Danish island of Funen, where the body was found in a ditch on July 20.

His body was so badly decomposed that Brinkmann could only be identified by his teeth.

“There is no immediate evidence to suggest that there is a crime behind his death, and that’s all I can say about it,” Andreas Bruun from the local Funen police told Denmark’s Ekstra Bladet newspaper.

Pokémon Go, a location-based augmented reality game, has been a huge global phenomenon since it was introduced earlier this month, with Denmark no exception.

The game has sent players roaming around little frequented areas hunting cartoon animals around the real world with their phones. A woman in the American state of Wyoming found a corpse in a river while hunting down the virtual monsters.

The game has also brought unexpected dangers, with a Danish 21-year-old on Thursday killed by a delivery van near Aarhus while apparently playing the game. Police said in a press release that they had found the app still running on the man’s phone when they arrived at the scene.

“When we arrived at the scene of the accident, we found his phone unlocked with the Pokémon app running. We cannot know for certain whether he was playing the game at the time of the accident, however,” Jørn Kristen Nielsen from the local Himmerland police told TV2.

Police districts across Denmark had been deluged with calls from concerned citizens panicked by intruders who later turned out to be Pokémon players.

Dazzling Reminders of Mortality

By

wsj.com

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

A meditation on the afterlife from Latin America. Photo: Photo: The Hispanic Society of America

In 'Four Fates of the Soul,' Death and the three alternatives that await the deceased's soul—Heaven, Purgatory and Hell—spur the viewer to contemplation with compelling detail.



A meditation on the afterlife from Latin America.

Every now and then, a dazzling work of art resurfaces, seemingly out of nowhere. It happened recently with a quartet of little polychrome wood sculptures made in Ecuador in the 18th century and purchased by the Hispanic Society of America Museum and Library at an art fair in New York in May.

These "Four Fates of the Soul," which have been in a private European collection for the past 80 years, escaped the notice of art historians and seem not to have been published. They are, said Mitchell Codding, the Hispanic Society's director, "totally unique in our experience"—and totally arresting.

Ranging in height from 6¼ to 7½ inches, these half-length figures portray in striking detail Death, represented by a skeleton, and the three alternatives that await the deceased's soul: Heaven, seen as a prayerful figure cloaked in a floral tunic; Purgatory, depicted as a contrite, naked supplicant; and Hell, a wretched, fiery figure evincing terrible pain. As a reminder of our mortality, they send shivers up the spine, rattle the brain and—as intended—provoke meditation on eternity.

The damned soul, surrounded and completely reddened by flames, is the most captivating, the apotheosis of the series. This condemned man screams out, head cocked toward heaven, mouth agape and tongue extended, perhaps hoping for a drop of watery respite (like the rich man in Hades in the Gospel of Luke). Tears stream from his glass eyes, which are red. His wild hair is afire; his body seared. His arms, one plagued by a toad, the other by a leech, are fettered at the wrists and chained to his neck. His pain is so great that he tears open his chest in anguish.

Though they are unsigned, Mr. Codding and other experts are convinced that the sculptures were made by Manuel Chili (c. 1723-1796), an indigenous artist known as Caspicara ("wooden face" in Quechua). He was one of two prominent sculptors in 18th-century Ecuador; the other, Bernardo de Legarda (c. 1700-1773), being one of his teachers. By their era, Spanish missionaries had been importing Spanish Renaissance and Baroque artworks for centuries, giving rise to the Quito School, which mixed their intense, often gruesome realism with indigenous sensibilities. The New World artworks, like Caspicara's figures, were richly colored, lavishly decorated, largely religious pieces that, even when depicting bloody themes, often glisten with gold and silver.

Caspicara carved many works that can be seen in Ecuador's churches and museums. Among his distinguishing characteristics are a markedly accurate portrayal of human anatomy, the ability to

capture emotion, and precise carving. Historical accounts cite King Charles III of Spain (1716-1788) saying, with some bravado, “I am not concerned that Italy has Michelangelo; in my colonies of America I have the master Caspicara.”

For his “Souls,” Caspicara probably drew on one of two sets of European prints (which can now be seen in the collection of the British Museum). One sequence comprises four similar images, c. 1610-1620, made by Egbert van Panderen, a Dutch engraver. Another array contains six prints, c. 1615, by the German engraver Alexander Mair; it adds a dying man and a bishop’s coat of arms, neither, it seems, made by Caspicara.

The Van Panderen match is closer, but even he was just an inspiration. Caspicara literally fleshes out each soul, giving each a torso, changing their poses and investing them with emotion the prints lack. While it’s uncertain whether these sculptures were part of an altarpiece or displayed on their own, perhaps in niches, it is clear that their master carver was a perfectionist: They are completely finished in the round, with each strand of hair on the back of their heads delineated, each rib visible.

The “Souls” start simply with the skeleton—a fairly faithful representation except that the decayed body, including rotten teeth, is elongated for emphasis—and escalate in intensity. The celestial soul, with highly polished rosy cheeks, cherry lips and individually painted eyelashes, is surrounded by clouds. He (though some think this figure is female, Mr. Codding believes all four are male) wears a rosette-bedecked blue garment with a lustrous belt and sleeve ends, an effect achieved by placing a layer of gold or silver leaf beneath the paint and finish.

Like the blessed and damned figures, the sunken-cheeked soul in purgatory gazes skyward; he emits tiny glass tears from his glass blue eyes, which also have eyelashes. Caspicara elongated his fingers, perhaps to stress the physicality of his pleading. He is suffering, tinged with flames, but not as terribly as the condemned soul.

In essence, Caspicara makes all four more expressive than their inspiration, a more compelling spur to contemplation.

The idea of representing souls is not unique in Spanish and Spanish Colonial art; but depicting these four manifestations does seem to be. For all four of Caspicara’s soul-stirring pieces to have survived together is rarer still. At a time when many museums are rushing to make up for their past lack of interest in art from Latin America, the Hispanic Society has snagged quite a catch.

—Ms. Dobrzynski writes about culture for many publications and blogs at www.artsjournal.com/realcleararts.

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Is skyjacker D.B. Cooper living in San Diego?

5 a.m. July 13, 2016

sandiegouniontribune.com

Documentary suggests Bankers Hill retiree should be investigated

A four-hour documentary that aired on the History Channel this week suggests the infamous airplane hijacker known worldwide as D.B. Cooper may be living out a quiet retirement in a Banker's Hill condominium.

The documentary is the work of Ventura County filmmaker Thomas J. Colbert, who says he spent five years with a team of 40 investigators to identify the enigmatic Cooper.

The film focuses on Robert W. Rackstraw, now 72, a former Army paratrooper.

Colbert said his team's analysis of handwriting samples, DNA and other evidence does not rule out Rackstraw as the one who hijacked Flight 305 but it does not confirm him either. He said the possibility should be reviewed by authorities.

"This has been a scab on the FBI for many years, and I have friends there," said Colbert, a former news and public-relations man who says he spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on the hunt. "I'm hoping the FBI opens up the case, but we will see."

Someone using the name of Dan Cooper — later popularized as D.B. Cooper — bought a one-way Northwest Orient Airlines ticket from Portland to Seattle on Thanksgiving Eve 1971. He claimed to have a bomb, secured a $200,000 ransom and jumped out of the back of the plane and into the annals of American pop culture.

FBI officials in the Seattle field office issued a statement to The San Diego Union-Tribune seven minutes after the documentary broadcast concluded.

The agency says the files on NORJAK — as the case is known — have been sent to Washington D.C. for storage and historical value. Nothing short of a break on physical evidence will bring further investigation.

"Every time the FBI assesses additional tips for the NORJAK case, investigative resources and manpower are diverted from programs that more urgently need attention," the statement said. "Although the FBI will no longer actively investigate this case, should specific physical evidence emerge — related specifically to the parachutes or the money taken by the hijacker — individuals with those materials are asked to contact their local FBI field office."

Rackstraw did not respond to messages left by The San Diego Union-Tribune on his phone and at his home. When Colbert's investigators approached Rackstraw outside his 45-foot yacht "Poverty Sucks" at the Navy Yacht Club in Coronado, Rackstraw would only say the evidence was intriguing.

The filmmaker offered Rackstraw $20,000 for movie rights to his story. The former paratrooper mulled the idea for a few moments, twice asking to see the check Colbert wrote out and brought with him.

Then Rackstraw said, "The problem is, I don't remember a lot of it."

An uncle named Cooper

In the days immediately following the Northwest hijacking, letters signed "D.B. Cooper" were mailed to newspapers in Reno, Nev., Portland, Ore. and Vancouver, B.C.

Two of the notes — the first and last — were sent from within 50 miles of Valley Springs, a remote Northern California town where Rackstraw's parents lived and where the Vietnam veteran stayed on and off throughout the 1970s.

The four letters, hand-scrawled in halting capital letters not unlike the passenger ticket filled out by Dan Cooper, were mailed over five days from hundreds of miles apart.

Do you think Robert Rackstraw is D.B. Cooper?

The circumstantial connections are among 90 pieces of evidence offered by the filmmakers.

In another example, the film references a 1960 family vacation to Phoenix, where Rackstraw as a teenager met John "Ed" Cooper, an uncle who was an avid skydiver with hundreds of jumps to his credit.

One working theory in the documentary is that Rackstraw became enamored of his skydiving relative on the Arizona vacation, which might explain why the hijacker chose the pseudonym Cooper when booking a flight from Portland to Seattle a decade-plus later.

Whoever D.B. Cooper was, he fought crushing wind and pounding rain the day he became a fugitive, as he made his way down the stairs at the tail end of the Boeing 727 two miles above the thick forests of southern Washington.

"I don't have a grudge against your airline, miss," the hijacker told a flight attendant before jumping, according to an FBI transcript. "I just have a grudge."

With the ransom money tied to his body and a parachute across his back, the man wearing a black suit, trench coat and loafers leaped into the sub-zero night sky.

Experts and amateur sleuths alike have debated for decades whether Cooper survived the unprecedented jump and, if so, whether he made it out of the backwoods wilderness along the Washington-Oregon border.

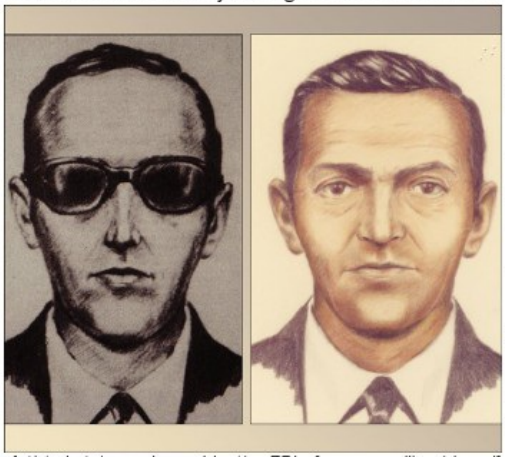
The new documentary makes the case that Cooper survived, a feat only possible for someone with the right training and experience.

Rackstraw was a decorated Army paratrooper, trained in special forces and survival skills, who knew his way around the kinds of explosives Cooper used to threaten the airliner crew, according to the film.

The investigation by Colbert also chronicles other run-ins with the law by Rackstraw, suggesting he was capable of something like the skyjacking. According to Colbert and his team:

- In 1978, he was convicted of check fraud, explosives charges and an unrelated airplane theft and was sentenced to two years in state prison.
- Rackstraw received a two-year probation term in 1992 for damaging property he rented while building an illegal barn to house construction equipment
- In 1999, the FAA suspended his commercial pilot license for providing false statements on an application and failing to report a drunk-driving conviction as required.

Artist sketches released by the FBI of a man calling himself D.B. Cooper, who vanished in 1971 with $200,000 in stolen cash after hijacking a commercial airliner over Oregon.*U.S. FBI/Handout via Reuters*



Artist sketches released by the FBI of a man calling himself D.B. Cooper, who vanished in 1971 with $200,000 in ...

Another enticing piece of evidence laid out in the History Channel film is a photo identification of Rackstraw issued by the U.S. Army in 1970.

The black-and-white mug shot bears resemblance to a Cooper sketch released by the FBI in 1971, with the two faces sharing close-cropped black hair, a receding hairline and deep-set eyes.

'I told everybody'

Rackstraw was named as a suspect in the hijacking by the FBI in the 1970s. Agents ruled him out in part because flight attendants on the plane said Cooper appeared to be 35 to 45 years old, according to the documentary, when Rackstraw was 28 at the time.

Rackstraw told reporters in 1979 that he was the infamous hijacker, then quickly recanted.

"I told everybody I was (Cooper)," Rackstraw told Colbert, before explaining the admission was a stunt.

The documentary dwells on connections Rackstraw had to colorful characters connected to the case over the years.

Filmmakers interviewed people in the Oregon communities of Corvallis and Astoria, where a charismatic grifter calling himself Baron Norman de Winter first appeared in the summer of 1971.

According to these witnesses, one of whom was elected mayor and another who became a priest for the Catholic Church, de Winter turned up in Astoria in July, weeks after Rackstraw was discharged from the Army.

De Winter told people he was a Swiss baron vacationing across the West Coast by way of a small plane he piloted himself. He quickly won their confidence with tales of royalty and a grand chalet, and promised to whisk many of them away on a European holiday come Christmas-time, townspeople told the filmmakers.

Colbert's investigation uncovered up to nine witnesses who are convinced de Winter and Rackstraw are the same guy.

De Winter left Astoria and showed up in Corvallis a few weeks later, flying a small plane over the area by day and spinning tales of nobility and adventure with drinking buddies by night. He left without notice days before the hijacking, according to the film.

According to the team of retired investigators, there is near certainty that Cooper, Rackstraw and de Winter are somehow connected. They were never seen separately at the same time and they were independently confirmed to be in the same vicinity in the second half of 1971.

"It is statistically impossible for three master criminals to all be operating within 100 miles, let alone three that look alike, have the same flying skills and their arrivals and departures are synchronized like whack-a-mole," the investigative report concludes.

Colbert plans a news conference in Los Angeles Wednesday to call for the FBI to reopen the case. The agency's initial reaction does not bode well for his effort.

"In order to solve a case, the FBI must prove culpability beyond a reasonable doubt," spokeswoman Ayn Dietrich-Williams said. "Unfortunately, none of the well-meaning tips reported have yielded the proof needed to resolve this investigation."

Colbert copyrighted the investigation findings and is selling his e-book, "The Last Master Outlaw," at dbcooper.com.



+ Read Caption

Some of the stolen $20 bills taken by a hijacker calling himself D.B Cooper and found in Oregon, U.S., by a young boy in 1980, are displayed in an undated FBI picture. *FBI/Handout via Reuters*

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Dead Body 'Sat in Aussie Restaurant for 3 Days'

thedailybeast.com

http://www.thedailybeast.com/cheats/2016/07/23/dead-body-sat-in-aussie-restaurant-for-3-days.html

Australian police are investigating how a dead body was able to sit unnoticed in the bathroom of a fast food chain for three days. The restaurant, Hungry Jack's, issued a statement Saturday confirming the incident at a restaurant near Perth and expressing readiness to cooperate with the investigation. The body of the man, who has not been identified, was discovered Monday morning. He had entered the restaurant on Friday before entering the bathroom, where he was found dead in a stall, according to local media. A police spokesman said the death was not suspicious but police were looking into the circumstances of how the body went unnoticed for so long.

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By Dana Matthews on 06/09/2016

weekinweird.com



Week In Weird

Dead Children's Playground is a Haunted Park Hidden Inside Alabama's Largest Cemetery

Drost Park in Huntsville, Alabama might just be the world's most unfortunately-situated park. Nicknamed Dead Children's Playground, the eerily-isolated park is located in a secret spot smack-dab in the middle of the one-hundred-acre Maple Hill Cemetery. Yep, you guessed it, it's haunted.



UFoq4Hu

Photo credit: Imgr, torchit

Maple Hill Cemetery is Alabama's largest cemetery and was founded way back in 1822, and though the graveyard has been at the center of quite a bit of paranormal activity, it's Dead Childeren's Playground that is the real hotspot when it comes to meeting a ghost. The small playground is tucked away *inside* the actual cemetery, and many paranormal investigators say it's a regular haunt for the spirits of deceased children who still come to play when the sun goes down.



7mFQCAF

Photo credit: Imgr, torchit

Legend says that during the 1960s, the area around Huntsville was gripped by a terrible rash of child abductions that devastated the city. Unfortunately, many of the children didn't survive the clutches of their captors, and their bodies were discovered around the area where the macabre playground now sits.

Photo credit: Imgr, torchit

Over the years, many curious adventurers have made the midnight trek down the long dark road to Dead Childeren's Playground with the hopes of capturing paranormal activity for themselves. Investigators have reported witnessing the swing moving by itself, as well as hearing the disembodied voices of children singing, playing, and even calling out to them. The swings, which are said to sometimes swing back and forth, side by side, are usually at the center of the activity.

Photo credit: Imgr, torchit

The citizens of Huntsville are so fond of the little haunted playground that in 2007, when the city

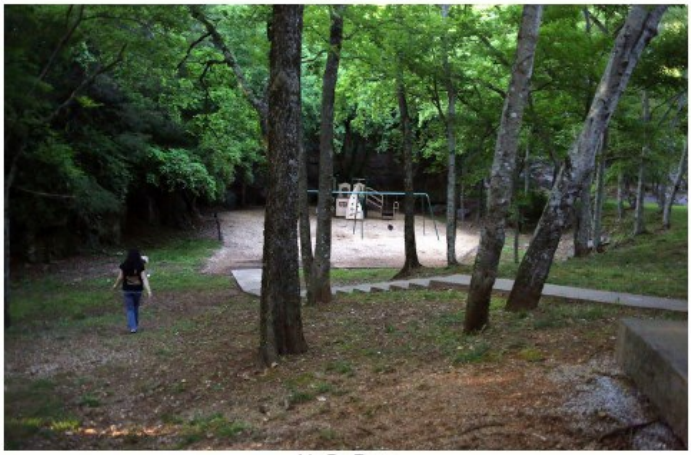


WRIISy3

removed the slides and swing sets to make more room of the cemetery, the public outcry caused the city to not only put the playground back, but to replace all of the equipment with brand new installations.

Photo credit: Imgr, torchit

It seems that The Dead Children's Playground isn't going anywhere, and seeing as the paranormal activity has only increased in the past few years, it's safe to say that the spirits haunting the park are just as glad to have the space as the living.



NgBoDam

Would you spend the night in Dead Children's Playground? What's the weirdest thing you've ever seen in a cemetery? Let us know in the comments below, and don't forget to like us on

Dana Matthews

6 Comments

1. Pim Tinnin

06/09/2016 at 2:40 PM



PYDMyuw

The small playgrounds were there to keep children busy while families buried their dead, or it was decoration day.. most old ones have had somewhat of a playground, bag swings and old intertubes or tires. Took turns, many times on a bag swing

2. Rachel Bailey Barringer

06/09/2016 at 2:57 PM

I grew up in Huntsville I love this place

3. Lacey

06/09/2016 at 10:37 AM

The photo of the orb on the slide made me giggle. Child orbs who have lots of unstructured, free play are likely to grow up to become confident and competent adult orbs, I suppose.

What a weird thing, to build a park where the bodies of murdered children were dumped. Are there no plaques or dedications there? It would probably be a better way to honor their memory than plastic play structures, unless actual kids play there. It doesn't make much

sense to upgrade a park for the sake of ghosts…better to use that money to perhaps install a dedication and memory garden. Then again, who can resist a swing, even if it might mean sitting on top of a ghost child.

4. Joe May

06/10/2016 at 12:17 AM

Those ghosts look like flatworms

5. Staci

06/09/2016 at 8:24 PM

Im so happy i read this cause i havent seen this place since high school.. Im from Huntsville grow up thr most of my childhood.. Dead childrens playground is exactly evrthg u r sayin.. And yes i wld & hav stayed overnite thr whn i was in highschool.. We used to do alot of investigating thr plus partyin, etc.. Plus my mom & i lived at the end of Maple road in the last house on the couner of maple road a victorian house for a short while we also had alot of mysterious thgs happen thr too.. Boy this brought back alot of memories cause i luv to do thgs lik this & this place & several othrs in Huntsville is wht got me started with its history…

6. Judy

06/14/2016 at 5:40 PM

I am very certain my little niece buried in Maple Hill Cemetery does NOT play at "dead children's playground." She plays in heaven.

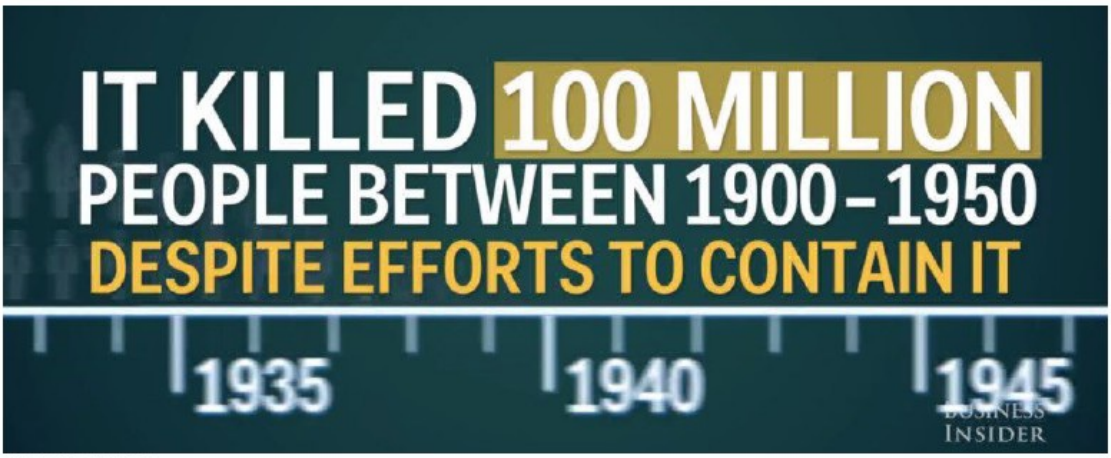
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This is the deadliest disease in human history

sciencealert.com

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This is the deadliest disease in human history

It's killed at least 6 popes.

FIONA MACDONALD
29 JUL 2016

There are some pretty terrifying diseases out there, but many people don't realise that the most deadly isn't Ebola or a viral flu strain - it's malaria.

As the Business Insider video above explains, for around 20 million years, the parasite that causes malaria has been plaguing humans and our ancestors.

The mosquito-borne disease halted the armies of Genghis Khan and Attila the Hun in their tracks, and infected George Washington, Theodore Roosevelt, Abraham Lincoln, and John F Kennedy.

It killed Alexander the Great, King Tut, and at least six popes. And according to some researchers, almost half of all humans who ever lived died from malaria.

Between 1900 and 1950 alone, the disease is estimated to have killed 100 million people, and many people don't realise that the Centres for Disease Control (CDC) was founded in 1946 primarily to fight malaria in the US.

Since then, the disease has been eradicated from much of the world thanks to insecticide use, but it still kills more than half a million people every year.

Watch the video above to have your perspective on the disease altered forever.

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These Ancient Headless Corpses Were Defleshed By Griffon Vultures - Forbes

forbes.com

Jun 9, 2016 @ 11:54 AM

Kristina Killgrove

Contributor



Example of a headless skeleton from Çatalhöyük. Skeleton 13162 is female with a neonate in the abdominal region. (Image courtesy of the Çatalhöyük Project.)

At the Neolithic site of Çatalhöyük in ancient Anatolia (modern Turkey), archaeologists have long wondered about the presence of griffon vulture symbols throughout the settlement and about a series of headless skeletons buried under house floors. A newly published study seeks to connect these two phenomena in a process called "vulture excarnation" – defleshing of corpses by vulture prior to burial.

Çatalhöyük is well known to archaeologists around the world. One of the world's earliest cities, it arose around 7500 BC, 300km south of modern-day Ankara, Turkey. The site is a cluster of densely-packed mudbrick houses, with as many as 10,000 people living there at its height. Individual houses shared walls, to such an extent that there were no doors or windows for people to enter — they had to go in through holes in the roof, making the tops of the buildings essentially streets. Walls, floors, and ceilings were all coated with plaster, and many were decorated with paintings and relief sculpture.

Burials at Çatalhöyük were made intramurally — that is, underneath the floors, usually in the central room of the family's house. Skeletons of men, women, and children are found on their sides in a tightly flexed, fetal-like position, which suggests the bodies were wrapped or bound before burial. This is normal for Neolithic burials in ancient Anatolia, but at Çatalhöyük, archaeologists found 14 headless bodies. Only one of them had cutmarks suggesting the body was probably defleshed by humans — the rest were a mystery. Researchers have long considered the possibility, though, that vultures, which figure prominently into the murals and sculptures at the site, were involved in defleshing the body prior to burial.





Left: Inside a model of a Neolithic house at Çatalhöyük. (Image by Stipich Béla, used under a CC-BY SA 3.0 license via

In an attempt to resolve this question, a team of archaeologists including Marin Pilloud (University of Nevada, Reno), Scott Haddow (Université de Bordeaux), Christopher Knüsel (Université de Bordeaux), and Clark Larsen (The Ohio State University) scoured the forensic literature for information on the effect of vultures on dead bodies and delved into the iconography of vultures in the murals at Çatalhöyük. Their have reported their findings in the *Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports*.

A common vulture to inhabit Turkey is the griffon type (*Gyps fulvus*). Modern forensic studies of

wikimedia commons.) Right: Wall painting with vulture from Çatalhöyük, in the Museum of Anatolian Civilization, Ankara, Turkey. (Image by Georges Jansoone, used under a CC BY-SA 3.0 license through wikimedia commons.)

defleshing by the griffon vulture have found that the birds remove flesh and largely leave tendons and ligaments, meaning the connections between the bones are mostly preserved. The birds leave some marks on bone, including puncture marks on the skull and shoulder blade, lines on the arm and leg bones, and a few V- and L-shaped marks. But in the forensic studies, the bones that had marks from the griffon vultures are few, and most bones have no indication at all that the vultures had defleshed the body. This means that attempting to find conclusive evidence of griffon vulture marks on bones dating to the Neolithic period is extremely difficult.



A group of griffon vultures eating the corpse of a deer. (Image by Mario Modesto Mata, used under a CC BY-SA 3.0 license, via wikimedia commons.)

Pilloud and colleagues note that defleshing of the Çatalhöyük bodies could have been carried out in a number of ways, such as by fellow humans, by exposure to the elements, or by other animals. But in each of those cases, they would expect to find evidence on the bones of those methods such as cut marks, sun bleaching, and carnivore marks — none of which they found.

Although direct evidence of vulture predation on the human remains from Çatalhöyük is not yet available, Pilloud and colleagues add up a series of facts to create a strong circumstantial case for it:

1. The tightly flexed burials at Çatalhöyük mean some sort of pre-processing of the corpse was done prior to burial. At the very least, because of rigor mortis (which would have prevented people from flexing the deceased's limbs), bodies were likely kept somewhere for a day or more.
2. Vultures are very good at removing flesh and keeping ligaments and tendons intact. This would explain the fact that the skeletons at Çatalhöyük were connected anatomically rather than being just a pile of bones.
3. Vulture excarnation would have reduced the odor of decay, which is important when burying the dead in a small, enclosed space under a house floor, such was common at the site.
4. Wall paintings at Çatalhöyük include representations of vultures attacking headless bodies, and there are skulls of griffon vultures embedded in plaster walls in some of the houses. Other ancient Anatolian sites also appear to have vulture iconography. This strongly suggests some sort of symbolic relationship between the ancient culture and the vultures.

By placing the deceased on the rooftops of the houses, the people of Çatalhöyük would have made the bodies immediately attractive to the griffon vulture and would have kept the bodies away from terrestrial carnivores. The vultures would have eaten the muscles and left the tendons, allowing the people of Çatalhöyük to wrap the corpse in a tight bundle and then bury the deceased underneath the house floor.

The most likely explanation, then, for these headless burials "based on current forensic experimental work, [is] that the people of Çatalhöyük may have employed vulture excarnation prior to interment," the archaeologists conclude in their publication.



Example of a tightly flexed burial common throughout the site of Çatalhöyük. (Image courtesy of the Çatalhöyük Project.)

While defleshing by carrion birds is not uncommon — a similar form known as "sky burial" has long been practiced in parts of China, Tibet, Nepal, India, and Mongolia — this potential evidence of vulture excarnation from Çatalhöyük makes the site one of the earliest in the world known to engage in this burial practice.

Read More: *Mystery of Morbid Aztec Skull Masks Solved by Archaeologists*

Kristina Killgrove is a bioarchaeologist at the University of West Florida. For more osteology news, follow her on Twitter (@DrKillgrove) or like her Facebook page Powered by Osteons.

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Phantoms in the sky, and fear on the walls... blogspot.co.uk

http://medieval-graffiti.blogspot.co.uk/2016/07/phantoms-in-sky-and-fear-on-walls.html

Demon traps, spiritual landmines and the writing on the wall...

The Project Director's blog for the Norfolk Medieval Graffiti Survey.

Saturday, 23 July 2016

If you want to take a decent photograph of the west front of a medieval abbey, priory or cathedral then the only time to do it is on a long summers evening. When the sun dips low, shines directly onto the stone face of the building, chasing away all the oblique shadows of the day. To capture all the details of the architecture, to pick out all the tiny nuances of the medieval masons, it has to be a long summer evening. Which is why, a few evenings ago, I was to be found at Binham priory in north Norfolk.



The west front of Binham priory, for all its faults, is absolutely sublime - and by far and away one of my favourite medieval buildings anywhere in England. The design is massively important in the history of English medieval architecture, for reasons that I simply won't bore you with here, and it really was, for its time, utterly revolutionary. However, as you will see, today it is far from perfect. The great west window, designed as the centrepiece of the whole priory, eventually failed - leading to it being bricked up in several stages in the late C18th and early C19th. Having said that, what is left today is still a masterpiece. The detailing of the arcading, the crocketed capitals and the dog-tooth decoration, are some of THE very best examples of the Early English style to be found in the country - and it was these I was there to photograph.

As the sun behind me sank lower and lower in the sky I took picture after picture, watching as the light changed as it played across the stone. Finally, as the light turned to an orange glow, I called it a day, packed up my camera equipment, and turned around to face the setting sun. Or 'suns' rather. For there in front of me, instead of one great orange sphere, there were two. Two suns in the sky. Quite unmistakably. For a few seconds I simply gazed in absolute wonder, faced with this strange, alien, reality. Two suns hanging low in the west...

The two suns in the sky is a rare atmospheric occurrence, or so modern science tells us, known as 'parhelion'. It is caused by the refraction of the sunlight in ice crystals or water droplets high in the atmosphere, and most usually occurs when the sun is low in the sky - at either dawn or dusk. In many cases the full effect is seen as three suns - with a 'copy' either side of the actual sun itself. The phenomenon is sometimes known as 'phantom suns', 'mock suns' or 'sun dogs'; the last term perhaps relating to Norse mythology, where it was thought that they were the dogs of Odin riding through the sky with their master. And these 'phantom suns' most certainly turn up throughout



folklore, superstition and mythology all over the world, and throughout history. Though rarely seen their appearance was most certainly noteworthy, and like many celestial events, their appearance is linked to great and momentous events.

Perhaps one of the most famous instances of this phenomena appearing in English history dates back to 1461, and the Battle of Mortimer's Cross during the Wars of the Roses. As the battle began the troops of Edward of York were reportedly terrified by the apparition of three suns hanging in the sky, taking it as an omen of ill fortune. However, Edward convinced his men that, rather than predicting their doom, the three suns were a symbol from God. The three suns represented the holy trinity, and were a sign that they were blessed by the Lord, and about to win a great victory. Heartened by his words the Yorkist troops hastened into battle and, just as Edward had predicted, routed the Lancastrian forces. Edward himself, it was said, was so deeply moved by the three suns in the sky that he later adopted the sunburst symbol as part of the Yorkist livery.

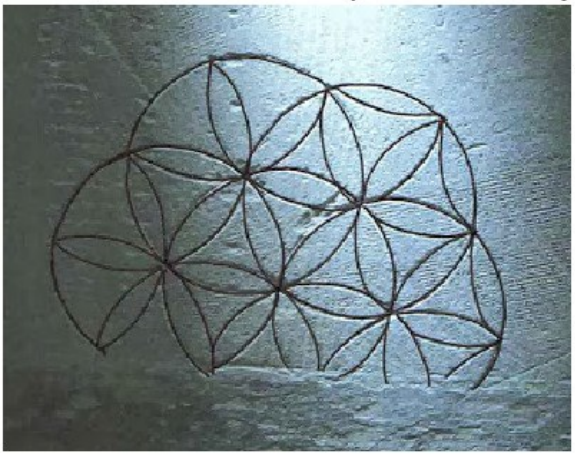


The English have, it has long been reported, always been a nation that put great store in such signs and omens. Writing in the seventeenth century Bishop Sprat noted that belief in such omens and portents was something that the English, in his opinion, were more than usually vulnerable to. The English were, he believed, a superstitious and credulous nation. And the omens were many and various. Putting aside the celestial phenomena of parhelion, eclipses and comets, there were strange sightings of battles in the sky, great swarms of unusual birds , earthquakes - and even, according to the report of two country women in 1651, flights of angels of 'a blueish colour and about the bigness of a capon'. The medieval and early modern world, it would appear, was a world of omens and portents - and none of them were good.

That is the thing about omens and portents. No matter whether they are blue-chicken-sized-angels or multiple suns in the sky, the chances are that they are going to be interpreted as the harbingers of doom. None of these omens ever appear to have been interpreted as foretelling 'a reasonably nice day next Wednesday', or even 'generally pleasant things will befall the beholder'. Oh no, that just won't do. Instead all of these omens are clear signs of extreme displeasure by (insert deity of choice), who is sending this sign as a way of informing the world that it is very shortly in for a damned good smiting... and no mistake.

And this is the thing about the medieval ideas of faith and belief. Whilst there are the little things that can be beneficial - the charms, talisman and just plain 'lucky' objects - all backing up the unquestionably beneficial prayers of holy mother Church - the large portents and omens are concerned with ill fortune and disaster. Whilst the successful harvest and good health can be

ascribed to general good fortune and the rewards of a devout life, the all too common disasters and setbacks, the unexpected floods and the sudden onset of disease were there as a punishment. A punishment for a life lived not as it should be. As Keith Thomas highlights, many people prayed regularly out of fear for what would happen to them, or their loved ones, if they didn't. Therefore, with fire, robbery, tempest, death or fearful accidents an all too common occurrence the medieval church, and the faith of the parish community, was one underpinned by fear.



And it is this fear that we find on the walls of our churches, laid bare in the graffiti etched deep into the stones. We don't find the angels, but we do come across the demons. We find the marks of protection. The physical symbols that hoped to reinforce the prayers of the church, in an all too often vain attempt to keep away the forces of ill fortune. We find the marks of desperate hope. A hope that briefly burned in the breasts of an entire community; all of whom are long since turned to dust. A community for whom two suns hanging in the sky before the west from of a priory were something to be dreaded and feared rather than gazed upon in wonder...

Posted by matt champion at 21:35

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Girl writhes and vomits in spine-chilling footage of exorcism

12:48, 30 Jul 2016 Updated 14:29, 30 Jul 2016 By Sam Webb

mirror.co.uk



Team of exorcists brought in after five teens 'possessed' after playing ouija board

This chilling footage shows a girl writhing, crying and vomiting during an exorcism after she is 'possessed' through an ouija board.

The video, taken in San Rafael del Sur in Nicaragua, shows an exorcist casting out a demon from a girl after the supernatural game goes horribly wrong.

A local news station reported that four adolescents and one younger child were playing 'Satanic games' with the ouija board.

An envoy from the Christian mission "The Light of the World performed the holy rite on Lucia Jimenez, 13, to 'relieve her of the demonic spirits that were tormenting her."

He shouts: "Rise, rise, rise, now, leave her, leave her.

"In the name of Jesus, leave her now, go outside. Tell him Jesus.



Canal 10

The girl was 'saved' by a Christian missionary

"Leave!"

Fortunately the 'demon' is cast out and the girls are suitably repentant about their brush with the thin veil that separates the world of men and the macabre realm of the spirits.

One, called Carolin, said: "I'm never going to play demonic games again.

Another added: "No, I'm only going to serve God."

A file picture of an ouija board

The exorcist added: "The truth is, young people, that you are looking at what can happen, you could be the next one, you could be possessed by them.

"You're never going to agree to these pacts with Satan, because they make you promise to serve him, then you have to gather souls for him.

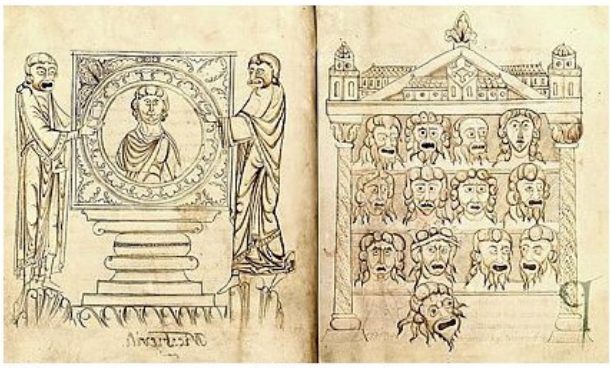
"It's better to make a pact with Jesus Christ and gather souls for him and work with us."



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Canal 10

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Love in the Time of Demons: Thirteenth-Century Approaches to the Capacity for Love in Fallen Angels

O amor em tempos demoníacos: diferentes abordagens no século XIII para a capacidade de amar dos anjos caídos

Juanita FEROS RUYS[1]

Resumo: Os demônios da Idade Média foram conhecidos, principalmente como criaturas que podiam sentir somente inveja, raiva e alegria maliciosa. Mas ainda havia uma tendência no pensamento escolástico e nos contos monásticos que também entendiam demônios como criaturas uma vez capazes – e talvez, somente uma vez-, de amor. Este artigo analisa a capacidade de amor e amizade atribuída a demônios no século XIII. Ele mostra como o amor pode ser visto como a emoção motivadora em sua queda original do Céu, e explora o papel do amor posteriormente pensado para ter jogado tanto em suas relações uns com os outros e as suas relações amorosa e sexual com os humanos.

Abstract: Demons in the Middle Ages were primarily known as creatures that could feel only envy, anger, and malicious glee. But there remained an undercurrent in both scholastic thought and monastic tales that also understood demons as creatures once capable—and perhaps still so—of love. This paper examines the capacity for love and friendship attributed to demons in the thirteenth century. It shows how love could be seen as the motivating emotion in their original fall from Heaven, and explores the role love is subsequently thought to have played in both their relationships with each other and their amatory and sexual relationships with humans.

Palavras-chave: Demônios – Amor natural – Livre-arbítrio – Amizade – Lascívia.

Keywords: Demons – Natural love – Free will –Friendship – Lust.

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Speculum offer as a summary of this chapter the marginal gloss: 'A demon loves and hates itself' ('Dæmon sese diligit & odit').

Scholastics had dealt with the issue of order and hierarchy amongst demons, coming to the conclusion that following their fall, demons existed within ranks of superior and inferior beings who respectively gave and took orders.[25] This raised the question of how such proud and envious creatures as demons might be able to work together towards the common goal of perverting humanity without erupting into internecine strife and discord.

William of Auvergne transforms this apparently simple question into a searching analysis of the emotions and motives of demons in their fallen state. Turning the question this way and that, William raises then negates possible explanations for demonic behaviour, tellingly evoking human precedents and parallels to give insight into demons' actions, and in the process powerfully anthropomorphizing these spiritual creatures.

William notes that demons are constrained by God to obey their master, so it should not be concluded from their lack of rebellion against him that they necessarily exist in happy accord with each other. Nothing should lead one to posit that patience, humility, peace, or love exist amongst them, since they are able to obey their master and make war against humanity without them.[26] They act solely out of hatred and wrath towards both God and humanity and this alone is the feeling ('affectione') by which they are animated.[27] As to the

[25] See for instance PETER LOMBARD. *Sentences*. In *Sententiarum Liber Secundus*. The Franciscan Archive. http://www.franciscan-archive.org/lombardus/II-Sent.html. Bk II, D. VI, c. 4; THOMAS AQUINAS. ST, 1, Q. 109, arts 1 and 2; BONAVENTURE, *Commentary on Sentences*. In *Commentaria in quatuor libros Sententiarum*. The Franciscan Archive. http://www.franciscan-archive.org/bonaventura/sent.html. Bk II, D. VI, art. 3, qs 1 and 2.

[26] WILLIAM OF AUVERGNE. *De universo*. In Guilielmi Alverni Episcopi Parisiensis, *Opera Omnia*. 2 vols. Frankfurt-am-Main: Minerva, 1963. Facsimile edn of Aureliae, ex typographia F. Hotot, 1674. Vol. I. III-IIae, c. XV, p. 1045aB: 'Et ex eadem causa contra eundem rebellare nolunt, etiamsi possent, non possunt autem, cogente eos creatoris justitia, & ligante, ne contra principem aliquid possint. Manifestum igitur est, quia non cogeris per ea, quæ præcesserunt, concedere, vel confiteri patientiam, vel humilitatem, apud eos esse, vel in ipsis; similter neque pacem, aut amorem; cùm præter istas virtutes, & sine illis, & obedire principi suo, & impugnationem nostram possint.'

[27] *Ibid.*, III-IIae, c. XV, p. 1045aB: 'Ex his igitur advertere potes, ex qua affectione, vel intentione nequissimo principi suo obedient, videlicet in odium creatoris, & hominum.'

question whether there can be love or peace between them, William concedes, as Vincent of Beauvais above, that there was at one time a certain natural love amongst them.[28] Now, however, it has been utterly blocked and extinguished by 'wrath, hatred, pride, envy, and other extremely poisonous passions of this sort', just as often happens amongst humans.[29] Compassion is totally foreign to them since 'the vehemence of the wickedness of these sorts of spirits does not permit them to wish for good, or to desire it for one another, or even to contemplate it', and totally annihilates whatever capacity for good affections they might have had.[30]

Fundamentally, since they lack proper fear of God, demons will always lack love.[31] It might be the case that in some way they still bear their original capacity for love in attenuated root form; this has been so damaged and stunted, however, that it cannot ever bear the expected fruit of love.[32] Finally, William posits the ultimate objection to demons' capacity to love each other: 'If the immense and unimaginable goodness of the Creator does not move them, or arouse in them the affection of natural love at least, how could what are infinitely lesser creatures be sufficient to arouse the feeling of either natural or dutiful love in them?'[33]

William's is clearly a scholastic approach to the capacity for love in demons that interrogates the question from multiple angles, offering hypotheses and

[28] *Ibid.*, III-IIae, c. XV, p. 1045aC: 'Quòd si quis quærat an amor, & pax, sit apud eos, vel inter eos, naturaliter quippe se invicem dilexerunt.'
[29] *Ibid.*, III-IIae, c. XV, p. 1045aC: 'qualiter igitur naturalis dilectio, & quam ob causam extincta est in ipsis...Dico, quia quemadmodùm videtur in hominibus, iram, & odium, superbiam, invidiam, & alias hujusmodi pestilentissimas passiones, naturalem dilectionem, adeò impedire, & quasi suffocare.'
[30] *Ibid.*, III-IIae, c. XV, p. 1045aD: 'vehementia malignitatis hujusmodi spirituum non permittit eos bonum velle, vel desiderare in alterutrum, sed nec etiam cogitare, præsertim cùm adeò illos occupet, possideatque malignitas, ut penè nihil, si tamen eis aliquid bonæ affectionis reliquerit.'
[31] *Ibid.*, III-IIae, c. XV, p. 1045aD: 'Quia non est timor Dei ante oculos eorum; similiter neque amor.'
[32] *Ibid.*, III-IIae, c. XV, p. 1045bA: 'nisi quis dicat amorem ipsum potentiam amandi naturalem, quæ etsi radicaliter in illis remanet, adeò læsa, adeòque impedita est, ut fructus debitus ex ea nasci, vel exire non possit.'
[33] *Ibid.*, III-IIae, c. XV, p. 1045bB: 'Si immensa, & incogitabilis bonitas creatoris non movet eos, sive excitat in eis dilectionis saltem naturalis, affectum, quomodò quæ in infinitum minora sunt, sufficient vel illum, vel qui pietatis est affectum excitare in illis?'

rebuttals before coming to a conclusion. It is fascinating, therefore, to see the same ideas manifesting themselves in other religious contexts intended for less sophisticated audiences. In his collection of miracle tales designed for the instruction of novices, the *Dialogus miraculorum*, Caesarius of Heisterbach provides a critical examination of the relationship between belief, knowledge, and love in the world of demons. Here the matter turns upon the a slight but semantically crucial case distinction in the Latin form of God's name. The Monk, the senior figure in this instructive dialogue, is relating to the Novice a tale about a provocative and troublesome demon who can ape the grammatically incorrect prayers and creeds he has heard recited by lazy and unlearned people.

This demon begins the Apostle's Creed: 'Credo Deum Patrem omnipotentem' ('I believe God, father almighty'). Several people pull him up on this, correcting him: 'You should say, I believe *in* God' ('Cui...quidam dicerent: Dicere debes, Credo in Deum'). The demon tries again, this time using the dative: 'Credo Deo' ('I believe God'). Several learned men, understanding that the demon is deliberately trying to avoid the meaning of the accusative, demand that he say: 'Credo in Deum' ('I believe *in* God'), but in no way can the demon be induced to speak these words. When the Novice asks the Monk to explain the distinction between these various syntactical forms, the Monk replies: 'To believe *in* God is to go through love towards God, just as the Saviour says: "Everyone who lives and believes in me will have eternal life"'.[34]

The demon, by contrast, is simply admitting that he acknowledges God's existence. The Monk explains: 'As the Apostle James says, the demons believe and they tremble, but they do not love. They believe that God exists, they believe that his words are true, but they do not believe *in* him, because they do not love him'.[35] Demons are thus shown, in the general understanding of the thirteenth-century monastic (Cistercian) world, to be fundamentally intelligent and knowledgeable—not to mention clever and cheeky—but utterly without the capacity to love their Creator.

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[34] CAESARIUS OF HEISTERBACH. *Dialogus miraculorum*. Edited by Joseph Strange. 2 vols. Cologne, Bonn, and Brussels: J.M. Heberle, 1851. Vol. 1, D. III, cap. VI, p. 117 'Credere in Deum, est per dilectionem ire in Deum. Unde Salvator ait: *Omnis qui vivit, et credit in me, habet vitam aeternam.*'

[35] *Ibid.*, p. 117: 'Daemon, sicut dicit Apostolus Jacobus, credit et contremiscit, sed non diligit. Credit Deum esse, credit vera eius verba esse, sed non credit in eum, quia non diligit eum.' See James 2. 19: 'et daemones credunt et contremescunt'.

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III. Do demons ever love humans?

A survey of medieval approaches to the capacity of demons to feel love would not be complete without touching on the complex question of the potential for love between demons and humans. Medieval speculations on this topic largely focused the physical aspect of such love, in terms of lust and the possibility of inter-species sexual relations (an issue that would become fraught in the early modern period with respect to the witch craze).

In fact, the question of miscegenation between angels/demons and humans had been a matter of concern since the earliest days of the Christian Church, as Paul's admonition to women to cover their heads 'on account of the angels' ('propter angelos') in 1 Corinthians 11. 10 makes clear.[36] This has been recognized as a reference to the 'Watcher Angels' of Genesis (Gen. 6. 1-4) who reputedly came down to earth in the earliest times and mingled with human women, drawn by their beauty ('quod essent pulchrae'), thus engendering a race of giants or heroes.[37]

Medieval scholastic philosophy was, however, quite firm in denying the possibility of demonic lust or desire as a goad to such miscegenation. In his *Summa theologiae*, Aquinas notes that although it may seem that demons are disposed towards carnal delights, in fact what they truly delight in is drawing humans into sin. Consequently, although they may strive to achieve this through sexual temptation, in such situations they are acting solely out of envy, not lust.[38]

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[36] 1 Cor. 11. 10: 'ideo debet mulier potestatem habere supra caput propter angelos'.

[37] Gen. 6. 2: 'videntes filii Dei filias eorum quod essent pulchrae acceperunt uxores sibi ex omnibus quas elegerant.' This reference was read in this way by, for instance, Tertullian: see ELLIOTT, Dyan. 'Tertullian, the Angelic Life, and the Bride of Christ'. In *Gender and Christianity in Medieval Europe: New Perspectives*. Edited by Lisa M. Bitel and Felice Lifshitz. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008, pp. 16-33. For several contextual studies of the origins of the myth of the 'Watcher Angels', see also *The Fall of the Angels*. Edited by AUFFARTH, Christoph and Loren T. STUCKENBRUCK. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004. And GIULEA, Dragos-Andrei. 'The Watchers' Whispers: Athenagoras's *Legatio* 25, 1-3 and the *Book of the Watchers*'. *Vigiliae Christianae*, 61 (2007), 258-81.

[38] THOMAS AQUINAS. ST, I, q. 63 a. 2 ad 1: 'Ad primum ergo dicendum quod Daemones non delectantur in obscenitatibus carnalium peccatorum; quasi ipsi afficiantur ad delectationes carnales, sed hoc totum ex invidia procedit, quod in peccatis hominum quibuscumque delectantur, inquantum sunt impedimenta humani boni.'

This position is fundamentally allied with Aquinas's conception of pleasure (*concupiscentia*) as a passion of the soul (*passio animae*), which means that it must necessarily be located both in the soul (in the sensitive appetite) and in the body.[39] As incorporeal beings, therefore, demons must remain wholly without the capacity to experience any passion of the soul, including desire (or lust).

While Aquinas's speculations are thus traditionally scholastic, William of Auvergne raises quite a different array of often inventive reasons why demons would not lust after humans. Perhaps the most surprising of these, given the subsequent early modern history of demonic paranoia, with its attendant images of grotesquely misshapen and animalistic demons, is the natural fineness of the demon as a spiritual being. William adduces the natural order of creation to show that demons, as wholly spiritual creatures (despite their current fallen nature), must still necessarily be a more refined form of creation than embodied humanity.

He asks: 'What lustful desire can there be in these kinds of spiritual beings for another species, and one far less noble than they themselves are?'. On the contrary, William asserts, it is far more likely that if demons did suffer from the goads of lust, their focus would be on their own kind, not another, 'since there is greater beauty in their own kind than in the race of women and men, for bodily beauty does not compare with spiritual beauty'.[40]

Also unexpected, perhaps, in the context of the philosophical writings of a priest and the bishop of Paris, is an additional argument against demonic lust that William draws from the human physiology of sex. He argues that the natural culmination of sexual activity, and its primary pleasure, is ejaculation. Since demons, as incorporeal beings, cannot emit semen, a major reason for their supposed proclivity towards sex is removed.

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[39] *Ibid.*, IaIIae, q. 30 a. 1 co: 'Talis autem delectationis appetitus videtur esse concupiscentia, quae simul pertineat et ad animam et ad corpus, ut ipsum nomen concupiscentiae sonat. Unde concupiscentia, proprie loquendo, est in appetitu sensitivo'.

[40] WILLIAM OF AUVERGNE. *De universo*, IIIa-IIae, c. XXV, p. 1070bG-H: 'Quæ concupiscentia libidinosa potest esse hujusmodi spirituum in substantias alterius specie, & longè ignobiliores, quàm ipsi sunt?...Ampliùs. Si est eis concupiscentia, & tantus ardor carnalis voluptatis, cur non in propriam speciem magis inardescunt, quàm in alienam, cùm major pulchritudo sit in specie propria, quàm in specie mulierum, & virorum; non enim comparabilis est pulchritudo corporalis ad pulchritudinem spiritualem.'

Against those who suggest that demons impregnate human women by various means of collecting and transferring semen into them, William retorts that this kind of artificial insemination hardly bears the hallmarks of unconstrained desire and so does not provide evidence of demonic lust.[41] Finally William turns to the question of sexual preference in order to demolish the idea that demons feel lust for humans. If demons were truly driven mad by the raging fires of lust, he suggests, there would be no limits as to their sexual targets, and males would be as much at risk of demonic copulation as women apparently are.

Yet, he contends, there is and never has been any account of demons behaving in a sodomitic manner. Consequently, he concludes, there is no lust in demons– and it is all the more shameful that there should exist sodomitic lust between men, when even demons, who strive to pollute humanity in almost every way possible, hold themselves aloof from such an activity.[42]

This understanding of the incapacity of demons as incorporeal, spiritual creatures to experience lust does not seem to have been limited to the world of scholastic philosophy, but to have permeated through to pastoral and monastic contexts as well. This is revealed by one of the tales told by Caesarius of Heisterbach in the *Dialogus miraculorum*. A pious young girl sworn to virginity is constantly assailed by a demon in the form of a handsome and well-dressed young man.

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[41] *Ibid.*, IIIa-IIae, c. XXV, p. 1070bG-H: 'Non est igitur commixtio inter hujusmodi spiritus, & mulieres, vera inquam commixtio à parte spirituum, cùm nulla sit ex parte illorum seminis generativi in vas generationis transfusio...Dico in hoc, quia nulla est voluptas conjunctionis hujusmodi, cùm voluptas concubitus potissimùm consistat in effusione seminis, nulla autem est voluptas libidinosa in translatione seminis hujusmodi.'

[42] *Ibid.*, IIIa-IIae, c. XXV, p. 1070bG-H: 'quomodò à sodomitica libidine immunes essent, ut non vel in viros nostros, vel in masculos suos concupiscentia insanirent...Nec igitur prætereundum est, quòd nec ipsi invicem istam abominationem, videlicet sodomiticam exercere, vel unquàm exercuisse, dicti sunt. In quo non mediocriter confunditur sodomitarum flagitiositas, cùm ab ea se contineant ipsi maligni spiritus, qui ad fædandam humanam naturam totis studiis invigilant, & totis viribus elaborant.' Elliott notes that in the thirteenth century, 'Demons play a modest, but interesting, role in securing "normative" sexual categories through their revulsion from "unnatural" sex': see ELLIOTT. 'On Angelic Disembodiment and the Incredible Purity of Demons'. In Elliott. *Fallen Bodies: Pollution, Sexuality, and Demonology in the Middle Ages*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999. pp. 127-56 (p. 151).

The demon's motive is given as the traditional one of envy– 'Invidens diabolus tantae virtuti'–although Caesarius soon after also refers to the demon as 'that licentious spirit' ('lascivus ille spiritus)', indicating perhaps a certain contemporary ambivalence in understandings of demonic sexual desire. Finally compelled by the girl's suspicious questioning of who and what it actually is, the demon blurts out: 'I am a devil' ('Ego sum diabolus'). Intriguingly, the girl then argues that such a creature should have no association with things of the flesh: 'Why then do you demand a carnal union, which is known to be contrary to your nature?'[43] It is telling that not only is a (presumably unlettered) young girl shown to be aware of the incompatibility of sexuality and incorporeal natures, but that she also characterizes it as a matter that is widely known: 'dignoscitur'. In turn the demon replies that it does not require physical consummation with her, merely her consent to the sin.[44]

The matter of demonic sexuality, having been raised, is then settled in the traditional manner: the demon is not lustful of itself, but works only to provoke sin in humans. Yet it was clearly a troubling matter and Caesarius reverts to it at the end of the tale, having the Novice restate his surprise that a demon should, against its own nature, seek and desire carnal copulation.[45] To this the Monk replies that it is not surprising that demons should importune women, but extraordinary that they should actually become physically intimate with them–although he then goes on to relate subsequent tales in which just such things occur.[46]

Beyond the question of whether or not demons could feel lust in their seductions of humans, it is revealing that a number of medieval tales posit a deeper emotional connection–love of some sort–developing between demons and their human lovers.[47] Caesarius relates a story of a relationship

[43] *Dialogus miraculorum*, ed. Strange, D. III, Cap. VI, p. 116: 'quid ergo exigis carnale coniugium, quod naturae tuae dignoscitur esse contrarium?'
[44] *Ibid.*, p. 116: 'Tu tantum mihi consenti, nihil aliud a te nisi copulae consensum requiro.'
[45] *Ibid.*, p. 119: 'non desino mirari, quod daemon, cum spiritus sit, copulam carnalem contra suam naturam concupiscat et requirat.'
[46] *Ibid.*, p. 119: 'Non mirum quod daemones feminas procantur, sed quod illis commiscentur mirabile est valde'.
[47] Elliott notes wryly: 'Once a woman had consented to seduction by an incubus, the resulting bond was seemingly as indissoluble and stifling as a bad marriage': see ELLIOTT. 'From Sexual Fantasy to Demonic Defloration'. In Elliott. *Fallen Bodies*. pp. 35-60 (p. 54).

between a young girl and her demon lover in which the girl, locked away in an upper room by her father because of her alluring beauty, has been seduced by a demon in the form of a handsome man.[48]

In short, the girl is brought both to love ('in amorem') and a sexual relationship. Breaking down in tears some time later and confessing her situation to her father, he removes her at once across the Rhine, hoping by this to sever her association with the demon. When the demon discovers his loss, he is violently upset and confronts the father. It is telling that when he demands to know the whereabouts of his lover he exclaims: 'why have you taken my wife away from me?' ('quare abstulisti mihi uxorem meam?'), indicating that, at least in his mind, there existed the sense of a formal and recognizable relationship between himself and his lover.[49]

By the same token, in his *Speculum naturale*, Vincent of Beauvais relates a tale concerning a demonic female phantasm (whom the marginal gloss in the 1624 edition refers to as a 'Diabolus succuba') who is found swimming in the ocean by a young man. Taken with her, despite the fact that he cannot coerce her to utter any words, he leads her home and marries her ('tandem in vxorem solemniter accepit'), and in time she bears him a son. Later upbraided by a friend for having taken a demon ('phantasma') into his home, the young man begins to grow afraid and, threatening his son at sword point, demands that his demon wife speak out and tell him her origins.

She replies: 'Woe to you, wretched man, you have lost a good wife ('vtilem…vxorem') now that you have forced me to speak. I would have been with you and it would have been good for you, if you had allowed me to maintain the silence that was enjoined upon me'.[50] At that she vanishes, and later takes her son with her. Here then we find the demonic partner in a

[48] It is, incidentally, a testament to the contemporary interest in how the machinations of demons functioned in practice that Caesarius specifies that she is tempted both internally by suggestion—'intus suggestione latenti'—and externally by the demon's blandishing words—'foris locutione blandiente': see *Dialogus miraculorum*, ed. Strange, D. III, Cap. VIII, p. 121.

[49] *Dialogus miraculorum*, ed. Strange, p. 121. This is also discussed by ELLIOTT in 'From Sexual Fantasy to Demonic Defloration', p. 55.

[50] VINCENT OF BEAUVAIS. *Speculum naturale*, Bk II, cap. CXXVI, cols 156-157: 'Væ inquit tibi misero, vtilem perdis vxorem dum me cogis effari. Tecum forem, & tibi benè foret, si iniunctum mihi silentium tenere permisisses.'

relationship with a human identifying it specifically as a formal marriage and a monogamous, procreative, and long-term bond. It is perhaps worth noting that also present in this story is the assumption that a mother demon will act to save the life of her half-human offspring, even where that means acting counter to her own best interests.

Conclusion

Despite a dominant cultural paradigm that depicted demons as consumed by hatred, wrath, envy, and malice, Western medieval culture appears also to have harboured a submerged but persistent memory of demons as creatures once endowed with love and still occasionally liable to its prickings. Peter Olivi theorized the companionable love– the *amicitia*– between the angels in Heaven as the primary motivating impulse behind their rebellion and fall, since their experiential enjoyment of each other subsumed the love they should properly have borne towards their Creator. Once flung down from Heaven, there remained in these now demonic creatures the original natural love ('naturalis dilectio') with which they had been created, but in a form irretrievably stunted and invalid.

This love was not and could not be wholly extinguished, but at the same time, it was unable ever to function as it should. Incapable now of loving either each other or God, their relations with humans remained, however, a disturbingly open question. While the possibility of lust was denied to them by scholastic philosophy, their potential to enter and experience love relationships with humans was raised in a range of monastic tales, harking back perhaps to earlier folkloric stories.

Interrogating the capacity for love amongst demons also raises troubling questions about the nature of love itself. In such scholastic theories and monastic tales, it is revealed as a force that can, through misdirection, overthrow the divine order of Creation, lead to dangerous inter-species miscegenation, and become degraded into the negative passions of pride, ambition, envy, and jealousy. Love in the time of demons is, then, a contradictory concept, producing more sympathetic views of demonic beings, yet darker and more contingent understandings of the boundaries and consequences of love.

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MALLORQUÍ-RUSCALLEDA, Enric (coord). *Mirabilia 15 (2012/2)*
As Emoções no Mediterrâneo Antigo e do início da era moderna
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Devils that glare at passers-by from church facades or leer maliciously at unfortunate sinners in medieval artworks and manuscript illuminations constitute the familiar faces of medieval demons. From the miracle tales of medieval monastic culture to high medieval scholastic explorations of the nature of the supernatural world and its inhabitants, demons are overwhelmingly characterized as irascible and malevolent beings, fuelled solely by envy, wrath, and hatred. Yet there remains a line of thought—albeit tenuous—running through these genres that remembers demons otherwise: as beings possessed of both a facility and a desire for that finest of emotions, love. This article explores the capacity for love attributed by thirteenth-century writers to demons in the time before their fall from Heaven, while they were still angels, following their fall as a cohort united in a single aim of persecution and misery, and in their troubled relations with humans.

Thinkers in the twelfth century had explored the boundlessness of love that existed between God and the human soul in the dawning of mystic theology, the nature of desire in the flowering of both hetero- and homosexual erotic Latin verse, and the power of friendship (*amicitia*) between men (and even, in Heloise's case, between men and women), particularly within monastic contexts. Yet when it comes to conceptualizing demonic love in the thirteenth century, these ideas take a darker turn, and thinkers find the obverse to the unbounded, ineffable, invigorating love of the twelfth century.

Instead they lay bare a world in which *amicitia* can exceed its limits and efface the love that should exist between God and his creation, and where love might exist only in stunted, contingent, and defective form, misdirected in its object of affection. At the same time, they offer a tantalizing alternative glimpse of what might constitute the demonic, evoking demons who once loved wholly and powerfully, who still retain the faintest spark of a love now forever remote from them, and who are capable of being—though wrongly and possessively—in love with humans.

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I. Why did the demons fall?

What had prompted the angels, God's highest and finest creation, to turn against him was a question that absorbed Christian thinkers throughout the Middle Ages. Pride was the traditional answer: a passage from Isaiah showed that the pre-eminent angel Satan (also known as Lucifer) had, at some point following the moment of his creation, dared to covet equality with the Lord, and had been flung headlong from Heaven for his presumption.[2] But this solution raised its own difficulties: if the angels had been created good–which had to be the case, since God could not create evil–how had such overweening pride been engendered in the first angel? Because of the inherent goodness of God's creation, the source of Satan's pride had to be traced to something that was, in its essence, wholly and necessarily good. For some high medieval thinkers, the answer could only be found in the concept of love.

The matter is carefully defined by Vincent of Beauvais in Book I, C. XXXI, of his *Speculum naturale* where he deals with the created nature of angels and the complex relationship between love and free will in guiding their actions. Angels, he says, have a natural love ('naturalem dilectionem') by which they are able to love both themselves and God. But this natural love is twofold, consisting of voluntary and involuntary components. Involuntary love is not subject to free will and, as no action of choice is implicated in it, it is morally neutral.

Voluntary love, however, is subject to free will, and is divisible into two: friendship (*amicitia*), by which we love something for itself, and desire (*concupiscentia*), by which we love something insofar as it is good, useful, or pleasurable to us. In their original state, Vincent contends, the angels loved God naturally. But there was an angel which did not have true charity because it did not love God for God's sake, but rather for its own sake, delighting in itself above all things and wrenching proper love from its true source to its

[2] Isaiah 14. 12-15: 'quomodo cecidisti de caelo lucifer qui mane oriebaris…qui dicebas in corde tuo in caelum conscendam super astra Dei exaltabo solium meum…ascendam super altitudinem nubium ero similis Altissimo…verumtamen ad infernum detraheris in profundum laci' (How have you fallen from Heaven, Lucifer, you who rose in the morning…you who said in your heart 'I will ascend into Heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God…I will climb above the height of the clouds, I will be like the Most High'…but you are dragged down into the depths of the abyss).

own good. This angel thus loved God by the love of desire for what was useful to it, but loved itself by the love of friendship, seeking its own good above all else.[3]

This picture is complicated by the thirteenth-century Franciscan scholar Peter John (or, 'of John') Olivi in Quaestio XLIII of his *Quaestiones in secundum librum Sententiarum* (Questions on the Second Book of the *Sentences*). Olivi agrees that the turn towards sin in the first angel must be located initially in the affect of love. Because love is the root of all emotions, so the first defect of sin must spring from a love of self that has tended towards evil, rather than from any other appetite or desire that proceeds secondarily from such vitiated self-love (such as pride, presumption, or ambition).[4] From this ill-tending love, which is not focused on God, but remains fixed on the self and subject to no other's will, arises presumption (which Olivi describes as a 'sensus et affectio') which ranges without limit or measure.

This vitiated and immoderate love seeks out the power it judges, in its blind presumption, to be suitable to itself—and so ambition is naturally born out of (self)-love.[5] From this genealogy of the passion of ambition, however, Olivi's analysis takes a fascinating turn, as he widens his scope to view the first

[3] VINCENT OF BEAUVAIS. *Speculum naturale*. Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1964. Facsimile edition of Dvaci, ex officina typographica Baltazaris Belleri, 1624, Bk I, C. XXXI, col. 41: 'Sed diligebat Angelus Deum super omnia amore concupiscentiæ, scilicet in ipso delectando super omnia. Nec tamen sequitur, quod haberet charitatem, quia non diligebat Deum propter ipsum Deum, sed propter se, scilicet retorquendo ipsam dilectionem ad commodum proprium, hoc est, non quia bonus erat, sed quia sibi vtilis erat.... Amore autem amicitiæ diligebat seipsum super omnia, scilicet volens sibi bonum super omnia.'

[4] FR. PETRUS IOHANNIS OLIVI, OFM. *Quaestiones in secundum librum Sententiarum*. Edited by Bernard Jansen. 3 vols. Quaracchi: Ex typographia Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1922, Vol. 1, p. 718: 'sciendum quod sicut amor est radix omnium affectionum, sic amor sui est radix omnium affectionum non virtualium; et ideo oportet quod primus defectus peccati inchoetur in vitioso sui amore potius quam in appetitu seu desiderio procedente ab ipso'.

[5] *Ibid.*, 1. 719: 'Et habet plenum praedominium, quia nulli est alteri voluntati subiectus nec subici valens...Et ideo naturali ordine sibi mox ingignitur sensus et affectio praesumptionis...Quia vero vitiosus et praesumptiosus sui amor fertur sine regula et mensura ad fines suos; idcirco honorem et potestatem et reliqua sibi propter se appetibilia, quantum est ex se, appetit infinite, et praecipue si secundum suam caecam praesumptionem aestimet se aptum ad illa. Et ideo ambitio est naturaliter connexa praefato amori.'

angel's sin as one not deriving solely from himself, but also implicating the entire angelic community. Olivi suggests that the first angel was drawn to self-love because

> he saw himself reflected within each heart as if he were the singular and universal head of all, and seeing his power in each of them, he saw himself multiplied and magnified, just like a man who sees himself reflected in many mirrors at the same time.[6]

In effect, then, the first angel's turn towards a disordered love began both in the angelic community's love of him, which was a form of good to him (and hence an aspect of the love-form of desire), and in the love-form of friendship, by which he loved himself as much in himself as in others.[7]

But while it might be possible to make a case for one angel– especially the pre-eminent angel– falling through an inordinate love of self that led to overweening pride and ambition, could this same motive be applied to all the angels that fell? Surely the angels of the lower orders could not have been operating under the same desire for equality with God that apparently overtook Satan? As Jean de Paris observes in this context, a pauper does not immediately seek to be a king, but more modestly desires some status simply a little higher than his own. Just so, the angels of the lower orders could not have been seeking equality with God, as Satan was, when they rebelled.[8]

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[6] *Ibid.*, 1. 719: 'Et ideo primus angelus facilior fuit ad se ipsum amandum in tota universitate angelorum et omnium creatorum sibi subiecta quam sumendo se sine illis, et praecipue quia in quolibet illorum sentiebat se quasi duplicari; videndo enim se esse in corde uniuscuiusque tanquam singulare et universale caput omnium et videndo potestatem suam super unumquemque, sic videbat se multiplicatum et magnificatum, sicut homo qui videt se simul in multis speculis.'

[7] *Ibid.*, 1. 720: 'Quia vero tota universitas ut ab eo dilecta sibi et propter se ipsum habuit rationem boni concupiscibilis tanquam obiectum amoris concupiscentiae: idcirco inchoatio deordinationis amoris videtur potuisse inchoari aut in praefato amore concupiscentiae aut in amore amicitiae quo se ipsum tam in se quam in omnibus amabat.'

[8] JEAN DE PARIS (QUIDORT). *Commentaire sur les Sentences: Reportation.* Edited by Jean-Pierre Muller. 2 vols. Rome: Herder, 1961-64, Vol. 2 (1964), D. VI, Q. 6, p. 91: '…quia angelus appetiit aequalitatem Dei. Sed si fuisset de inferiori ordine, istud non ita cito appetivisset, sed prius aliquid intermedium. Sicut pauper homo non immediate appetit se esse regem, sed aliquid medium inter ipsum et regem.'

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In his *Summa theologiae*, Thomas Aquinas suggests that Satan induced the other angels to fall, not by compelling them, but through a kind of exhortation, although he does not specify what form this might have taken.[9] Yet even if angels, as purely intellective beings, could instantly have perceived and consented to Satan at the moment that he expressed (through whatever kind of angelic communication system) his intention, as Aquinas avers,[10] this still leaves open the question of *why* they did so: what would have induced the angels to band together with each other under the leadership of one of their own against their Lord and Creator? And if pride were the motivating factor amongst all the angels, why should angels who baulked at being under the yoke of God have then been happy to subject themselves to one who was far inferior to him, and in fact created by him?

The scene has already been set by Olivi for the (perhaps surprising) answer: the lesser rebellious angels were swayed by the emotion of love. In Heaven, Olivi suggests, the angels visibly enjoyed each others' company, and, in comparison with each other, God was to them both unseen and absent. Because feelings will always be more easily and more powerfully swayed by the visible experience of a beloved good than by a good that might be greater, but which is far absent and not visibly experienced, so the angels were more attuned to their own company than to God's.[11] Indeed, as a community, the angels were almost like one body, the lesser angels being linked to the first angel like limbs connected to a head, and they saw themselves in the first angel just as sons do in their father's heart.[12]

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[9] THOMAS AQUINAS. *Summa Theologiae* (hereafter ST). In *Corpus Thomisticum*. Edited by Enrique Alarcón. http://www.corpusthomisticum.org/iopera.html. Pars 1, Q. 63, a. 8, co: 'Respondeo dicendum quod peccatum primi Angeli fuit aliis causa peccandi, non quidem cogens, sed quadam quasi exhortatione inducens.'

[10] *Ibid.*, 1, Q. 63, a. 8, ad 1: 'in eodem instanti in quo primus Angelus suam affectionem intelligibili locutione expressit, possibile fuit aliis in eam consentire.'

[11] *Quaestiones in secundum librum Sententiarum*, ed. Jansen, 1. 717: 'licet ipsi cognoscerent Deum, non tamen ipsum visibiliter videbant, sicut se ipsos, nec fruebantur eius visibili societate, sicut sua societate visibiliter fruebantur. Unde eorum intellectus ferebatur in Deum ut absentem, quamquam longe altiori modo ferrentur in Deum quam nos. Inter cetera autem ad quae facillime et vehementissime movetur affectus est visibilis experientia boni amati, quamquam sit secundum se longe minus quam sit aliud bonum absens et visibiliter inexpertum.'

[12] *Ibid.*, 1. 720: 'sic erant ei connexi sicut membra suo capiti et sic videbant se esse in illo sicut filios in corde patris.'

In a telling metaphor that raises and twists the question of temptation and fall, Olivi posits that the company of the first angel was as beloved and delightful to the lesser angels as the company of Eve was to Adam.[13] And so the lesser angels sinned by loving the first angel for himself beyond due measure, and for loving themselves in him and in relation to him. They were proud through his pride and gloried in his glory as though it were their own, since it was as if, through the bond of love, together they formed one body.[14] Consequently, it became completely contrary to both their natural bond and their will that they should be separated from him and his friendship[15] – and so they fell with him.

Permeating Olivi's arguments here is a fundamental suspicion of experiential knowledge. The angels in Heaven wrongfully enjoy each other's society to excess because they have visible experience ('visibilis experientia') of it; by the same token they do not value as greatly as they should God's presence because it is a good not visibly experienced ('visibiliter inexpertum'). That God's presence can be so devalued by an experiential outlook fundamentally highlights the epistemological deficiencies of experience. This same distrust also manifests itself in Olivi's treatise on the pagan philosophers, *De perlegendis philosophorum libris*, where Olivi critiques the experiential form of knowledge employed by the pagan philosophers, always reasserting the absolute primacy of spiritual knowledge and faith.[16]

Thus he comments that it is the nature of children to rely on sense perception alone, whereas God teaches through the principles of faith, which are above

[13] *Ibid.*, 1. 720: 'si societas Evae fuit Adae amabilis et desiderabilis: non mirum, si societas primi angeli fuit angelis inferioribus amabilis et delectabilis'.
[14] *Ibid.*, 1. 721: 'ipsi vero ponuntur consequenter peccasse, illum sibi indebite amando et se ipsos in illo seu in relatione ad illlum et in complacentiis et desideriis ac praesumptionibus et confidentiis tali amori annexis. Et attende quod ea ratione qua per nexum amoris erant unum illi in illius gloria quasi in sua superbiebant et gloriabantur et etiam in gloria omnium consociorum, quia totum erat unum corpus ex capite et membris compactum.'
[15] *Ibid.*, 1. 720: 'ideo sequestrari ab illo et ab amicitia illius secundum se et absolute erat contrariissimum naturali nexui et voluntati eorum. Pro quanto autem erat eis visibilior quam Deus, pro tanto potuerunt faciliter ferri in illum absque relatione in Deum.'
[16] FR. PETRUS IOHANNIS OLIVI. *De perlegendis philosophorum libris*. In Ferdinand Delorme, 'Fr. Petri Joannis Olivi tractatus "De perlegendis Philosophorum libris"', *Antonianum*, 16 (1941), 31-44, p. 38: 'Principia enim veritatis spiritualissima sunt et abstractissima, quae animalis homo non potuit percipere, quia eorum examinatio seu experientia non est sensualis, sed potius spiritualis.'

sense perception.[17] The potentially rebellious angels in heaven, with their reliance on knowledge and affinity through contiguity, and their consequent lack of appreciation of God as remote, thus function as forerunners of the pagan philosophers who will be similarly misled by trusting experiential knowledge ahead of divinely received knowledge.

Trusting in the teaching of experience rather than in faith, both demons and pagan philosophers become proud and presumptuous,[18] and therefore err. Olivi thus powerfully constructs love as a passion—one that is almost viral in its operation—that swept through the angelic community in Heaven, precipitating the birth of pride and ambition in the first angel and contributing to the rebellion and fall of the others.

II. Are demons capable of love in their fallen state?

If demons loved themselves and each other when they were splendid angels in Heaven, does that mutual love still pertain now that they have fallen from glory? Considering this question, Vincent of Beauvais calls again upon the distinction he had outlined earlier between love as a natural inherent emotion and love as a result of a free will choice. The demons, he asserts, have been created so that they naturally bear the capacity for love, but this love is morally indifferent because it is necessitated: 'For whether it wants to or not, every demon loves itself, and God. And for that reason in these impulses there is neither merit nor demerit, because they are wholly natural'.[19]

When it comes to their own will, however, demons choose the opposite of love: 'But by their rational will, which is free, they hate God. And they wish that he would not exist, if that could be.... They also hate every created being except themselves.'[20] So perverse has their relationship to other beings

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 39: 'Pueri enim sunt, qui solis sensibus vacant....Hanc autem stultitiam virga crucis fugat docens nos sumere principia fidei, quae sunt supra sensum.'
[18] *Ibid.*, p. 41: 'attende quod ipsi tradiderunt vane, tum quia cum ausu temerario et praesumptuoso, absque scilicet ducatu debito supremi magistri, tum quia cum modo curioso et fatuoso, quia scilicet non aspexerunt simplicitatem divini eloquii...'.
[19] VINCENT OF BEAUVAIS. *Speculum naturale*. Bk II, Cap. CXXIX, col. 158: 'Nam velit nolit, quilibet dæmon diligit se, & Deum. Et ideo in his motibus non est meritum, neque demeritum, quia pure naturales sunt.'
[20] *Ibid.*, col. 158: 'Voluntati autem rationali, quæ est libera, habent odio Deum. Et vellent eum non esse, si fieri posset.... Habent etiam odio omnem creaturam præter se.'

become that they are held in a tension between loathing the existence of other creatures while desiring it for their own evil ends:

> And every demon regarding another wishes simply that it did not exist, just the same as all other created beings. And yet in a certain way it wants that being to exist, namely so that it can harm it. For they applaud one another and delight together in their capacity to do harm: but each one hates each creature in so far as it is a created being, just as they also hate the Creator.[21]

Yet even with all this capacity for hatred, Vincent contends, they are not able to extinguish in themselves that fundamental natural love that promotes self-interest and preservation: 'For in no way is the natural affection in them able to be corrupted to this extent, that they should hate themselves, since their nature itself cannot support this, because it is necessarily a friend to itself and seeks its own good.'[22] This is a position that meshes with Aquinas's discussion of love and hate as passions of the soul, in which Aquinas makes it clear that it is impossible for anyone to hate himself, properly speaking.[23]

Vincent concludes his discussion by positing another fine distinction, the subtlety of which is expressed in his opposition of the terms 'effectum' (action, effect) and 'affectum' (natural love), as he declares that although 'the devil hates himself through deed ('per effectum'), namely through having corrupted himself through sin, yet he loves himself through natural feeling ('per affectum')'.[24] With good reason, then, does the 1624 edition of the

[21] *Ibid.*, col. 158: 'Et quilibet dæmon de alio simpliciter vellet eum non esse, sicut & alias creaturas. Et tamen quodammodo vult eam esse, scilicet vt noceat. Ex hoc enim quod nocent applaudunt sibi inuicem, & congaudent: sed quilibet odit omnem creaturam inquantum est creatura, sicut & creatorem.'

[22] *Ibid.*, col. 158: 'Nam nullo modo potest in eo adeo corrumpi naturalis affectio, vt odiat se, quia hoc ipsa natura non patitur, quia de necessitate sibi est amica, & appétit commodum suum.'

[23] THOMAS AQUINAS. ST, IaIIae, Q. 29, a. 4 co: 'Respondeo dicendum quod impossibile est quod aliquis, per se loquendo, odiat seipsum. Naturaliter enim unumquodque appetit bonum, nec potest aliquis aliquid sibi appetere nisi sub ratione boni.... Amare autem aliquem est velle ei bonum, ut supra dictum est. Unde necesse est quod aliquis amet seipsum; et impossibile est quod aliquis odiat seipsum, per se loquendo.' See also the discussion in MINER, Robert. *Thomas Aquinas on the Passions: A Study of* Summa Theologiae *1a2ae 22-48*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009, pp. 146-147.

[24] VINCENT OF BEAUVAIS. *Speculum naturale*, col. 158: 'Sic ergo diabolus odit quidem se per effectum, scilicet se corrumpendo per peccatum, tamen diligit se per affectum.'

Detroit Bomb Squad finds German World War I missiles at construction site

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Detroit Bomb Squad finds German World War I missiles at construction site

Workers uncovered projectiles while tearing down building

By Sierra Pedraja - Digital News Editor , Dave Bartkowiak Jr. - Digital Managing Editor
Posted: 12:14 PM, June 16, 2016 Updated: 3:18 PM, June 16, 2016

DETROIT - The Detroit Police Department Bomb Squad responded to a site in Southwest Detroit after a report of possible projectiles found at a construction site.

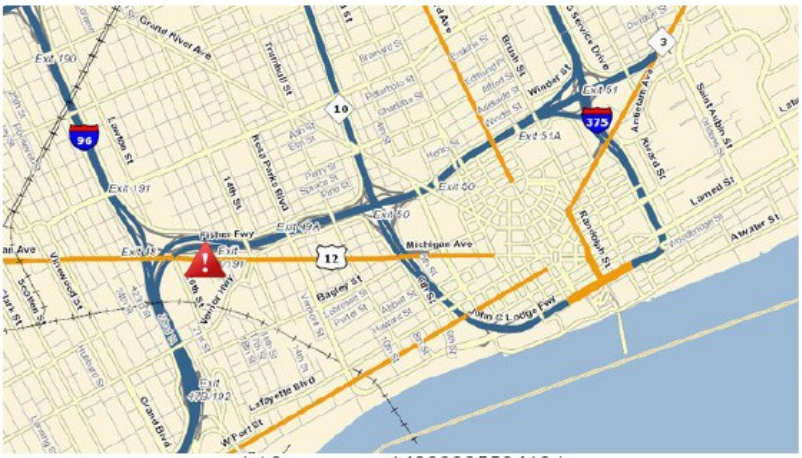


bomb squad WWI missile detroit_1466098968559.jpg

Police said workers tearing down a building Thursday at 2633 Michigan Avenue found what are described to be military World War I German 17-cm missiles.

"They were prepping a building for demolition," said Detroit Police Sgt. Michael Woody. "During that time they discovered four of what appear to be World War I 17-cm cannon missiles."

Woody said the missiles are about 2 feet tall and weigh about 150 pounds each.



mdot 2 new new_1466093552410.jpg

"The crew was smart enough to pull away and call police," he said.

Woody said one building nearby was evacuated as a precaution.

"We were able to determine that there were no wicks and there was not live ammunition. It's unknown at this time how long (the missiles) have been there," said Woody.

Officers searched the rest of the building to see if anymore missiles are there. Woody said these kind of findings are not uncommon in the city.

"Sometimes it's not uncommon for us to receive phone calls from family members after a loved one or grandfather had passed away saying we've cleared out some items and we've found a hand grenade, an old firearm or some ammunition," he said.

If you find something like this, Detroit police advise you not to touch it. You should call the police

and have them determine if its dangerous and how to handle it.

"You can't be cautious enough," said Woody. "If these four projectiles were active, there is no telling what kind of damage could have been done."

The FBI also responded to the site.

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(edited)7 hours ago
Jeremy Winnicker
Didn't know we had missiles in WW1... that's definitely not a missile, it's an artillery shell
(edited)7 hours ago
Fred Rouse
Those are so missiles! That's what the Germans used to beat the Zulu in WWI! Stop being a shill for Big History!
(edited)13 hours ago
Brian Knowles
I thought bomb like is never reach Michigan I guess wrong
(edited)13 hours ago
Tim Aiello
It was obviously never launched at us.... It was probably part of someone's collection in the past.
(edited)3 hours ago
Crystal Starr
We built everything for every war!! Believe it!

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Haunting photos document an unexplained light phenomenon in the Ozarks

dailymail.co.uk

Daily Mail .com

MailOnline US - news, sport, celebrity, science and health stories

The Devil's Promenade: Inside the rural American town haunted by mysterious light that even Army engineers are at a loss to explain

- On a road outside Joplin, Missouri, where the rolling Ozarks merge into the endless flatness of Oklahoma and Kansas, locals report seeing a light called the Spook Light
- The anomaly is variously described as a golden, red, or blue light but is always seen as one or more floating orbs
- In the early 1940s, the Army Corps of Engineers studied the lights in a failed attempt to scientifically explain them

By Daily Mail Reporter

A photographer has lifted the lid on a famously unexplained light phenomenon that appears in an area of the Missouri known as the Devil's Promenade

Locals in the Ozarks hills say they have seen the light and heard the tales of it all their lives.

The name of the area is the title of the series, created by artists **Lara Shipley** and **Antone Dolezal**,- but the mysterious apparition itself is known to the townspeople in southwest Missouri as the Spook Light.

Spook Light appears as a basketball-sized orb of light, but only every so often and only by chance on a road called E50, where the rolling Ozark hills disappear into the endless flatness of Kansas and Oklahoma.



Spooklight Road: Southwest Missouri's West 50 road is famous to area people as where Spook Light, a bright and aptly named anomaly



****MUST LINK BACK**** antonedolezal.com larashipley.com Spooklight*

On E50, also known as Spook Road, there's a gathering south of the town of Joplin each year at Halloween, when hopeful visitors and locals alike seek a chance encounter with the Spook Light.

Meanwhile, the cause of the light--which hovers in the sky and is seen to change colors as it moves



5050



Waiting for light: The Devil's Promenade is an area of southwest Missouri where the rolling hills of the Ozarks give way to the endless flatness of Kansas and Oklahoma

towards and away from the viewer--remains a mystery.

- A mass funeral then a watery grave: Rare picture shows... Consider yourself one of the family! The hilarious photos of...

Even the Army Corps of Engineers once tried to pinpoint the cause of the floating orb. They traveled to the area outside Joplin, a town now known as the 2011 site of a devastating F5 tornado, to study the Spook Light in the early 1940s.

They were unable to come to any conclusions.

Guesses as to its origins run from everyday expulsions of gas from the areas abundant shale deposits to UFOs.

Missouri Ghost Hunters Society catch the Spook Light on camera
: 0%
0:00
Play
Mute
Current Time
Duration Time
Fullscreen
Need Text
356p
272p
172p



Spooklight Road: Southwest Missouri's West 50 road is famous to area people as where Spook Light, a bright and aptly named



Isolated: The isolated locals somehow manage a living in rural Newton County, where methamphetamine and prescription

SPOOK LIGHT, GHOST LIGHT, OR DEVIL'S JACK-O'-LANTERN: A MYSTERY NO MATTER THE NAME

MANY NAMES

The Spook Light can be found south of Joplin, Missouri, a town now better known as the site of a devastating F5 tornado in 2011.

anomaly The light: Artists Antone Dolezol and Lara Shipley traveled to an area of the Ozarks known as Devil's Promenade, a moniker that lent their project its name, in order to try and catch the intermittent, unexplained phenomenon for which locals have varying explanations Waiting for light: The Devil's Promenade is an area of southwest Missouri where the rolling hills of the Ozarks give way to the endless flatness of Kansas and Oklahoma Denizens: The area where the Spook Light is colorful even without the lore. Some locals believe its the ghost of a Civil War soldier, while others say it is an Indian spook Isolated: The isolated locals manage a living in rural Newton County, where everyone seems have a version of the Spook Light story Parallels: The series points toward parallels between the Bible Belt area's haunting anomaly and its denizens' struggles to remain in the light, here on Earth and beyond 'An authentic guide by Bob': Called the Tri-State Spook Light by this guide, the phenomenon occurs on a rural stretch where the Ozarks flow into the endless, flat stretches of Kansas and Oklahoma Cabin in the woods: Everyone in Newton County has a tale about the light, which some insist is a brilliant red, while others say its a bright blue Tattooed: A local shows off his devil tattoos. Artists Antone Dolezal and Lara Shipley portray a haunting landscape and the indelible mark it leaves on its inhabitants 'We feel the frequent and mysterious appearance of the Spook Light has come to represent for the people we meet a desire for redemption and the fear of slipping into darkness,' write Shipley and Dolezal

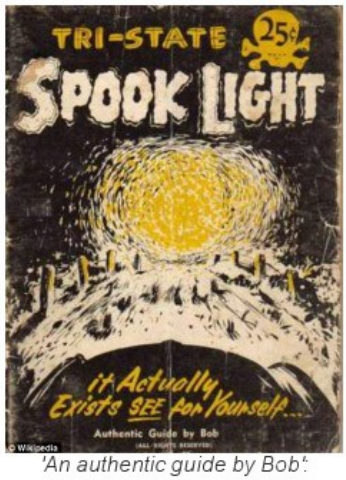
drug abuse run rampant



5050



Parallels: The series points toward parallels between the Bible Belt area's haunting anomaly and its denizens' struggles to remain in the light, here on Earth and beyond



'An authentic guide by Bob': Called the Tri-State Spook Light by this guide, the phenomenon occurs on a rural stretch where the Ozarks flow into the endless, flat stretches of Kansas and Oklahoma

The anomaly is variously called the Spook Light, Ghost Light, Joplin Ghost Light, Ozark Spook Light, Devil's Jack-O'-Lantern, Hornet Ghost Light, and others.

MANY LEGENDS

Like folklore anywhere, the legend of the Spook Light and its origins varies each time its told. Some maintain the light is the torch of a beheaded Quapaw or Osage Indian in search of his lost head.

According to another origin tale, the orbs are the spectral remains of the mutual murder of a native man and a white farmer in the woods.

Others legends say the light is the ghost of a Confederate soldier or that of a decapitated miner.

NO EXPLANATIONS

Despite an attempt in the 1940s by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to study the Spook Light, it's true origins remain a mystery.

Some say the lights are the result of gases emerging from the abundant shales in the area.

Others blame reflected car headlights, though official reports date back to an 1881 publication called Ozark Spook Light, well before motor vehicles began passing through the area.

Luminescence from rotting organic matter has also been fingered, as have UFOs.

ONE FORM

While the name and explanations vary, all those who see the Spook Light report it as an orb or several orbs that float on the horizon and can appear to move quite quickly. It is described as being able to change colors from blue to red to gold.

'Its very spooky,' said local Mary Roundtree. 'It looks like a light way far off, and then its right on you.'

Roundtree said she saw the light as a kid when she and her parents were lured to E50 out of curiosity.

'My heart was just pounding and it was up in my throat and I thought my head was going to explode and my hands got all cold,' she said.

Local legend has it that the first to see the lights were the local Quapaw Indians, and some stories saw the light is actually the tormented spirits of two Quapaw lovers run off a cliff by an angry Chieftan.

Other folklore says the light is the torch of a Quapaw or Osage Indian who was beheaded and is searching for his head. Still others maintain it's the spirit of a decapitated miner or Confederate soldier in search of his lost head.

And for every story behind the lights, there's another name for them. It has been referred to as the Hornet Ghost Light, Devil's Jack-O'-Lantern, Ozark Spook Light, and Joplin Ghost Light.

Regardless of the tale behind it or its proper name, the locals who've seen the phenomenon are adamant it is real.

Roberta Williams from Carthage, Missouri has seen the light and told her story to Mysterious Universe.



'An authentic guide by Bob': Called the Tri-State Spook Light by this guide, the phenomenon occurs on a rural stretch where the Ozarks flow into the endless, flat stretches of Kansas and Oklahoma Cabin in the woods: Everyone in Newton County has a tale about the light, which some insist is a brilliant red, while others say its a bright blue



Tattooed: A local shows off his devil tattoos. Artists Antone Dolezal and Lara Shipley portray a haunting landscape and the indelible mark it leaves on its inhabitants

'It was before midnight,' she said. 'It was like a big, huge ball with a yellow glow and it went right straight through our car. I just screamed.'

Mary Roundtree, a local historian, told NPR she's seen the light, too.

'Its very spooky,' she said. 'It looks like a light way far off, and then its right on you.'

Roundtree said she saw the light as a kid when she and her parents were lured to E50 out of curiosity.

'My heart was just pounding and it was up in my throat and I thought my head was going to explode and my hands got all cold,' she said.

And like almost everyone else whose seen the bobbing orb, she has her own variation of the tale that's behind it.

According to Roundtree, a old Indian man came across some dead bodies in the woods where the Spook now appears. After he buried them, a white farmer came by carrying a lantern. The two killed one another but the light of the lantern still hangs there as an apparition.

The Devil's Promenade is as dedicated to the the inhabitants of the rural, impoverished area as it is to the Spook Light. The series paints a vivid picture of both the haunting landscape and the fascinating people who populate it.

'We feel the frequent and mysterious appearance of the Spook Light has come to represent for the people we meet a desire for redemption and the fear of slipping into darkness,' write Shipley and Dolezal. 'Our aim is not to provide documentation, but to suggest a narrative that, in the spirit of the light, is part fixed in this unique region and part afloat in a mysterious, otherworldly realm.'



'We feel the frequent and mysterious appearance of the Spook Light has come to represent for the people we meet a desire for redemption and the fear of slipping into darkness,' write Shipley and Dolezal

Artist Laura Shipleyis based in Lawrence, Kansas where she teaches photography.

Antone Dolezalis a New Mexico-based artist and writer who primarily focuses on the American social landscape.

- by sapphyre11201865

Comments (933)

The comments below have not been moderated.

Andy Cloud, Carthage, United States, 2 years ago

I've seen it twice. The first time it stayed far off in the distance. The second time it was aggressive and chased my (soon to be) wife off. It's real alright. Also the pictures of the folks from the area is a terrible representation of the area. I never see people that look like that.

Max Abelton, chicago, United States, 2 years ago

Funny how the "light" is always behind a tree...or a pole....or some object...or on a 1930's video camera....Looks like some bored photographers, and random drug addicts looking for entertainment and/or playing with extended exposure to me. No evidence here.

wylekat, Orlando, 2 years ago

I have actually seen an orb (not there) that was softball/ grapefruit sized, and was literally a glowing ball of light encased in a translucent shell, and it passed by within touching distance. I thought it was a bike light, and had gotten off the road for it (I was walking), and everything was fine until there was no bike attached to the light, and it did a sweeping turn right past me and into the woods, lighting

them up as it went. When it blinked out, *I* went. I read this article to see hopefully, something similar. I am very disappointed in seeing pics of rednecks and little else. I could accurately measure what i saw because of the short distance involved... if that light in the video was any further away, I'd say it was lights on top of the Washington Monument!

seanj0hn, Peterhead, United Kingdom, 2 years ago

The DM forgot to mention that the light is living in constant fear of the local population, better explaining the short and often abrupt appearances.

walt, somewhereusa, 2 years ago

Why a "spook" light and not a "redeeming" light? Just because it is not understood, it doesn't have to be bad. A little intelligence makes lemonade out of lemons.

walt, somewhereusa, 2 years ago

Why a "spook" light and not a "redeeming" light? Just because it is not understood, it doesn't have to be bad. A little intelligence makes lemonade out of lemons.

Bridget Bardot, Raleigh, United States, 2 years ago

We have a "ghost light" where I am from in NC. I've seen it myself numerous times. No idea what it is, but it's creepy and fascinating at the same time.

April Richards, Greensburg - PA, United States, 2 years ago

Are the lights still being seen even after the EF-5 tornado and EF-3 tornado devastated the area?

edzzup, ramona, ca, usa, 2 years ago

Banjo jokes...or jibes, more like...evidently the full, fresh flower of British wit...

TheMightyOak, Shrewsbury, United Kingdom, 2 years ago

'Joplin' - so gave its name to Scott and Janis. I seem to remember hearing about a form of luminescent gas that escaped from a lake-bed some time ago, (the location I can't recall), so, providing there's a lake or similar in the vicinity, perhaps it may be something along those lines. Interesting story nonetheless.

paevo, USA, United States, 2 years ago

Those people look like they just stepped out of an episode of "The Twilight Zone"...

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The Unbelievable Tale of Jesus's Wife

Krishnadev Calamur

theatlantic.com

A hotly contested, supposedly ancient manuscript suggests Christ was married. But believing its origin story—a real-life Da Vinci Code, involving a Harvard professor, a onetime Florida pornographer, and an escape from East Germany—requires a big leap of faith.



On a humid afternoon this past November, I pulled off Interstate 75 into a stretch of Florida pine forest tangled with runaway vines. My GPS was homing in on the house of a man I thought might hold the master key to one of the strangest scholarly mysteries in recent decades: a 1,300-year-old scrap of papyrus that bore the phrase "Jesus said to them, My wife." The fragment, written in the ancient language of Coptic, had set off shock waves when an eminent Harvard historian of early Christianity, Karen L. King, presented it in September 2012 at a conference in Rome.

Never before had an ancient manuscript alluded to Jesus's being married. The papyrus's lines were incomplete, but they seemed to describe a dialogue between Jesus and the apostles over whether his "wife"—possibly Mary Magdalene—was "worthy" of discipleship. Its main point, King argued, was that "women who are wives and mothers can be Jesus's disciples." She thought the passage likely figured into ancient debates over whether "marriage or celibacy [was] the ideal mode of Christian life" and, ultimately, whether a person could be both sexual and holy.



Karen King Responds to 'The Unbelievable Tale of Jesus's Wife'

King called the business-card-size papyrus "The Gospel of Jesus's Wife." But even without that provocative title, it would have shaken the world of biblical scholarship. Centuries of Christian tradition are bound up in whether the scrap is authentic or, as a growing group of scholars contends, an outrageous modern fake: Jesus's bachelorhood helps form the basis for priestly celibacy, and his all-male cast of apostles has long been cited to justify limits on women's religious leadership. In the Roman Catholic Church in particular, the New Testament is seen as divine revelation handed down through a long line of men—Jesus, the 12 apostles, the Church fathers, the popes, and finally the priests who bring God's word to the parish pews today.

King showed the papyrus to a small group of media outlets in the weeks before her announcement—*The Boston Globe*, *The New York Times*, and both *Smithsonian* magazine and the Smithsonian Channel—on the condition that no stories run before her presentation in Rome. *Smithsonian* assigned me a long feature, sending me to see King at Harvard and then to follow her to Rome. I was the only reporter in the room when she revealed her find to colleagues, who reacted with equal

toward a doctorate in Egyptology. If her then-husband had come across an interesting Coptic papyrus, she said, "he would have told me about it.")

I asked the Ernests how Laukamp's signature might have wound up on the sales contract for the papyri. "He was a person who very easily believed things he was told," Gabriele told me. He was good-hearted, she said, recalling how he brought breakfast to a homeless man in a park where he walked his dog. But he was "simple" and "weak," a man who was easily misled.

When I mentioned the name Walter Fritz, she stiffened. "I can easily imagine Walter Fritz saying, 'I need your signature for the company,' " she said. Laukamp "would have signed that without reading everything."

As I spoke with people around Berlin, a picture of Fritz began to take shape.

When I entered a metal-machining workshop on the outskirts of Berlin one drizzly afternoon, the owner, Peter Biberger, who'd done business with Laukamp's company, answered wordlessly when I asked his opinion of Walter Fritz: He moved his forearm in a slither, like a creature swimming through murk. "He was an eel," Biberger explained. "You couldn't hold him. He slipped through your fingers."

When Fritz turned up at the Free University around 1988, it was in the guise of a man who already had it made. On a campus where student fashions ran to grungy jeans and T-shirts, he often wore elegant dress shirts and blazers. He owned two cars, both Mercedeses.

Fritz's zeal for Egyptology was just as conspicuous. He got a job as a tour guide at Berlin's Egyptian Museum. He backpacked around Egypt; took a class with Munro, the resident expert on Egyptian art; and joked, one classmate recalled, that the randomly assigned letters on his license plate—which mirrored the academic shorthand for a group of Egyptian funerary spells—foretold an illustrious future in the field.

His superiors, however, told me his enthusiasm wasn't always matched by hard work. "Fritz was quite eager and interested in Egyptology, but he was the type who was reluctant to take much effort," Karl Jansen-Winkeln, the professor who identified Fritz in the *North Port Sun* photograph, said when we met for coffee near campus. Jansen-Winkeln, who taught a class that Fritz attended, recalled his Coptic as "not very good."

"He appeared to me like a person who wants to sell you something and not like a person who's really interested in research."

"He paid a lot of attention—how would I say this?—to what other people thought of him," Christian E. Loeben, an Egyptologist who had worked for Munro and considered Fritz a friend, recalled when I visited his office at the August Kestner Museum, in Hannover. "He would wait to see what his counterpart expected," and then turn himself into that person's "little darling."

The arrival of a new department chair in 1989 may have sealed Fritz's fate. Jürgen Osing was a respected scholar of Egyptian languages but a harsh and exacting teacher. In the whole of Osing's career, I'd heard, just three students managed to complete a doctorate under him.

Fritz's 1991 article might have been his ticket to a promising future in Egyptology. He had gotten one of the Amarna letters—clay tablets of correspondence to Egyptian pharaohs from rulers in the Near East—shuttled from a museum of Near Eastern history in the former East Berlin to the

Egyptian Museum, which had the facilities for a more sophisticated photographic study of its partly legible text.

"There was a little problem," Jansen-Winkeln told me: The article angered Osing. "Fritz went to the museum to copy the Amarna letter and make a photograph, but many of the conclusions he reached in the paper were what he had heard in Osing's Egyptian-history class." Fritz did thank Osing in the article's first footnote, and cited him twice more. But Jansen-Winkeln says the article's key findings "were not [Fritz's] ideas."

Reached by phone in December, Osing recalled almost nothing about Fritz or his article. What he and everyone else agreed on, however, was that soon after Fritz's paper was published, he vanished from campus. None of them ever heard from him again.

My trail might have gone cold there if not for a hazy memory: Two of Fritz's acquaintances recalled him materializing briefly in the early 1990s as the head of some new museum of East German history. This rumor had always baffled them—Fritz had no training in the subject. When I pressed for details, a former classmate recalled that a blurb about Fritz's appointment had appeared in *Stern*, a major German magazine.

After I returned from Berlin to my home in Washington, D.C., I asked the Library of Congress to pull every issue of *Stern* from 1991 to 1994. After an hour of page-flipping, I found it. In the February 27, 1992, issue, sandwiched between notices about celebrities like Glenn Close and La Toya Jackson, was a photo of Fritz, in a tie and three-button blazer, standing beside a painting of Erich Mielke, the dreaded chief of the Stasi, the East German secret police.

"Walter Fritz, 27, antiquities scholar, is the successor of Erich Mielke—at his desk in the former East Berlin Stasi headquarters," the notice began. He wasn't Mielke's actual successor, the article made clear, but the head of a new museum in the former Stasi headquarters.

When my interpreter called Jörg Drieselmann, the longtime director of the Stasi Museum, he remembered Fritz well. In 1990, soon after the fall of the Berlin Wall, East German activists had seized the Stasi compound, to prevent former Stasi officials from destroying their intelligence files. The activists wanted the building preserved as a research center, museum, and memorial.

Fritz applied for the job of museum director. "Nobody from the group knew him," Drieselmann, who was a co-leader of the activists, said. But Fritz made a convincing case: "He had come from the Egyptian Museum in West Berlin, so he was experienced in museum work."



When asked whether the activists had known that Fritz's museum experience consisted of giving tours, Drieselmann said they may not have probed that deeply. The mere fact that he was a "Wessi"—a West German—made him a "fascination" to the East Berliners who hired him in October 1991.

Drieselmann said that Fritz excelled at self-promotion but was less impressive as an administrator. In March 1992, five months into the job, the museum's board members ordered him to shape up. They were concerned, among other things, about valuables—paintings, Nazi military medals, Stasi memorabilia—that had gone missing from the building's storage during Fritz's tenure. Drieselmann confronted him about his job performance in the

In 1992, Stern , a German magazine, covered Fritz's appointment as the director of a new museum in the former Stasi headquarters in Berlin. (Library of Congress)

spring of 1992. Not long after, Fritz disappeared, leaving behind a resignation letter.

"I don't want to raise allegations, but it is possible that a West German knew much better than us inexperienced East Germans that these [objects] were easy to sell—and worthwhile selling," said Drieselmann, who replaced Fritz in 1992 and has led the museum ever since. He said that there was never an investigation into whether Fritz misappropriated anything, and that none of his suspicions were ever proved.

Fritz's career change from Egyptology student to Stasi Museum chief was unusual. But his reappearance as an auto-parts executive a few years later was stranger still.

During my trip to Germany in January, my interpreter and I rode the subway to Haselhorst, a drab industrial quarter on Berlin's western border. We entered Herzsprung Drehteile GmbH, a metal-parts factory, and knocked on the door of the chief executive, Axel Herzsprung—the toolmaker who'd been Laukamp's friend and business partner. A potbellied man with a wry air, Herzsprung seemed unruffled by our unannounced visit.

In my brief phone chat with Fritz, he'd said he couldn't recall how he and Laukamp had met. Herzsprung's memory was clearer. "They met in a sauna," he said. Sometime between 1992 and 1995, he said, Fritz had struck up a conversation with Laukamp, who was 22 years his senior, in the steam room of a Berlin fitness center they both frequented.

How did a stranger in a sauna become a top executive of their auto-parts company?, I asked. "He snuck in," Herzsprung said, bitterness edging his voice. "He was very eloquent. Laukamp was easily influenced—he didn't have a very high IQ—and Fritz was successful in talking his way in."

Herzsprung made no effort to hide his hatred of Fritz. "I was so angry at him that I thought it was better we never meet in the dark somewhere," he told me. Each blames the other for the company's 2002 bankruptcy: During my phone call with Fritz, he accused Herzsprung of embezzlement; Herzsprung, meanwhile, accused Fritz of a Machiavellian plot to take over the business by driving a wedge between Herzsprung and Laukamp. As the company imploded, Fritz—who split his time between Florida and Germany—persuaded BMW to let him take its contract to a different business in Berlin, APG Automotive Parts.

When I found APG's owner at home one evening in a working-class fringe of Berlin, he told me that the business had thrived for a few years. It drew annual profits of some $250,000, thanks in part to Fritz's sales talent and the BMW work he'd brought with him. But APG began dissolution proceedings in February 2008, after a former employee broke into its warehouse, the owner said, and destroyed the main machine that made brake parts.

Two months later, Fritz tried to sell his North Port house, to no avail. In February 2010, he listed it again, lowering the asking price by more than a third, from $349,000 to $229,900. On July 8, 2010, the house still unsold, Fritz had an angry letter published in the *North Port Sun*, demanding layoffs and 35 percent salary reductions for highly paid city staffers—it was the right thing to do, he argued, given the pay cuts and joblessness people in the business world were facing.

The next day, Karen King received her first e-mail from a man claiming to have an interesting set of Coptic papyrus fragments.

By every indication, Fritz had the skills and knowledge to forge the Jesus's-wife papyrus. He was the missing link between all the players in the provenance story. He'd proved adept at deciphering enigmatic Egyptian text. He had a salesman's silver tongue, which kept Laukamp and possibly others in his thrall. Perhaps most important, he'd studied Coptic but had never been very good at it—which could explain the "combination of bumbling and sophistication" that King had deemed "extremely unlikely" in a forger.

But if Fritz did do it, what was his motive?

Money drives many forgers, and by 2010 Fritz's assets certainly appear to have taken a beating. The owner of the papyrus agreed to loan it to Harvard for 10 years, but that's hardly exculpatory: An Ivy League imprimatur could produce a kind of halo effect, giving a forger cover to sell other fakes with less scrutiny.

But there was another possibility. If Fritz had seen his Egyptology dreams thwarted, maybe he nursed a grudge against the elite scholars who had failed to appreciate his intellectual gifts—who had told him he was mediocre at Coptic and short on original ideas. Not a few forgers over the decades have been driven by a desire to show up the experts.

Or maybe even this theory was too simple. Curious whether Fritz owned any domain names besides gospelofjesuswife.com, I ran a search of Web registrations. When the results came back, I felt as if I'd fallen down a rabbit hole.

Beginning in 2003, Fritz had launched a series of pornographic sites that showcased his wife having sex with other men—often more than one at a time. One home page billed her as "America's #1 Slut Wife." The couple advertised the dates and locations of "gangbangs" and asked interested men to e-mail "Walt" a photo and phone number, so he could clear them to attend. There was no charge, but the men had to agree to Walt's filming.

"I just wanted to thank you for a wonderful time during the gangbang on Friday," someone named Doug was quoted as saying on the fan-mail page of one of the sites. "Don't get me wrong Walt you are a great guy, but [your wife] … Wow!!!"

Fritz's Web sites belonged to a fetish genre built around fantasies of cuckolded husbands powerless to stop their wives' lust.

All of the sites seem to have been taken down in late 2014 and early 2015. But archived pages and free images and videos were easy to find online. In an interview on a German-language Web site, Fritz's wife, under her porn name, described herself as the daughter of a U.S. military officer who had been stationed in Berlin when she was a teenager. She and Fritz met in Florida in the 1990s, and he encouraged her to act out their shared fantasies of her having sex with other men.

Fritz appears in a few videos, but he is more often behind the camera. He included a bio on one site, under his occasional porn name, Wolf: "I am a 45 year old executive, living in S. Florida. Stats: 6'2", 185 lbs., brown hair, slim, no belly, clean cut, and well endowed." Then he went on to list his academic credentials, as if for a LinkedIn profile: "I am college-educated with a technical MA-degree form [*sic*] a major university, and an associate degree in arts. I speak three languages fluently and read two old languages."

This juxtaposition of lewd and learned appears in still sharper relief on one of his wife's sites, where

passages from Goethe, Proust, and Edna St. Vincent Millay are interspersed with philosophical musings on Jesus's teachings, the slippery nature of reality, and "the Perfection of Sluthood."

After trawling regions of the Web I hadn't even known existed, I discovered that Fritz's wife, under her porn name, enjoyed a measure of fame. Before Yahoo shut it down in 2004, she boasted online, her "Femalebarebackgangbangextreme" discussion group had nearly 50,000 members. The couple's work belonged to a fetish genre built around fantasies of cuckolded husbands powerless to stop their wives' lust for other men. The genre is called "hotwife."

When I mentioned these findings to my own wife, she told me to read *The Da Vinci Code*. Studied closely, she said, the book could be a Rosetta stone for Fritz's motives.

Dan Brown's best seller is fiction, of course, but it draws on the work of feminist religious scholars like King. Its premise is that conservative forces in the Roman Catholic Church silenced early Christians who saw sex as holy and women as the equals—or even the saviors—of men. Threatened by these vestiges of pagan goddess worship, Church fathers defamed Mary Magdalene and enshrined the all-male priesthood to keep women out.

Brown's chief point of departure from scholars like King is his made-for-Hollywood plot, which turns on a Catholic conspiracy to destroy evidence of Jesus's marriage to—and child with—Mary Magdalene. A clandestine society whose past members include Leonardo da Vinci and Sir Isaac Newton has resolved to keep alive the secret of Jesus's marriage, along with an ancient practice that celebrated the sanctity of sexual intercourse. In a pivotal scene, members of the society take part in a ritualistic orgy.

"For the early Church, mankind's use of sex to commune directly with God posed a serious threat to the Catholic power base," the book's protagonist, Robert Langdon, explains. "For obvious reasons, they worked hard to demonize sex and recast it as a disgusting and sinful act."

I wondered whether Fritz and his wife had seen in the book a way to sanctify their adventurous sex life, to cloak it in the garb of faith. The couple launched their first porn site in April 2003, a month after *The Da Vinci Code* was published. Perhaps they had spun a fantasy of Fritz—whose birthday happens to be Christmas—as a kind of Jesus figure, and his wife as a latter-day Mary Magdalene.

In 2015, Fritz's wife self-published a book of "universal truths" that she claims is a product of divinely inspired "automatic writing." God and the archangel Michael, she says, speak through her. The dates on its diarylike entries overlap with the papyrus owner's e-mail courtship of King. "Knowledge as you know, is what brings forth the fortune," she wrote in the penultimate entry, dated August 29, 2012, less than three weeks before King's announcement in Rome. "For all the Bibles and all the churches in the entire world, cannot give you what you can give to yourself."

Could Fritz and his wife have convinced themselves that a higher being was guiding his hands, too? To turn a *Da Vinci Code* fantasy into reality, all you needed was material proof of Jesus's marriage, and a real-life Robert Langdon. In the book, Langdon—a Harvard professor of "religious symbology"—finds the modern descendants of Jesus and Mary Magdalene's daughter thanks to a cryptic message on a scrap of papyrus. Perhaps Fritz and his wife had found their Langdon in Karen King.

Nearly four months had passed since I'd first spoken with Walter Fritz. The time had come to call him again.

When he answered, on a Monday morning in March, I laid out what I'd discovered: his training in Egyptology, his ties to the Free University, the fact that he'd registered gospelofjesuswife.com weeks before King's announcement.

"So what is it you want to know?" he asked.

The truth about the papyrus, I said. All the evidence pointed to him as the owner.

"Maybe I know the person who owns it," he said. He claimed the papyrus's owner was a friend whose identity he was not at liberty to disclose. When I asked him whether he'd had any contact with Karen King, he said he had never met her but had talked with her briefly "just to clarify something."

I mentioned the allegations of forgery.

"No owner has ever claimed this is real," he said of the papyrus. He was right: In the e-mails to King, the owner never said he had an authentic piece of antiquity. He wanted King's opinion about that very question, and in the end she and the experts she consulted could find no signs of fabrication.

Fritz also confirmed something else people I'd met in Germany had told me: that he had obtained a technical degree in architecture in Berlin and kept a drawing board in his apartment. That is, he not only had studied Egyptology, but could draw—a skill that might help someone convincingly mimic ancient script. With that background, I said, he must have expected questions about his role in a possible forgery, whether he was the owner or not.

"Let's be the devil's advocate and say either Mr. Laukamp or I conspired to forge a papyrus to make a statement," he said when we spoke again later that week. "Well, there is still no scientific evidence at this point that we did it."

But could he have pulled off a near-perfect forgery if he'd wanted to?

"Well, to a certain degree, probably," he said. "But to a degree that it is absolutely undetectable to the newest scientific methods, I don't know."

I didn't understand these hedges, so I asked point-blank whether he had forged the Gospel of Jesus's Wife. His response was unequivocal: "No."

Fritz denied having money problems at the time he contacted Karen King. He also disputed the idea that he'd had trouble at the Free University or the Stasi Museum. Though he acknowledged that some items had gone missing from the museum during his tenure, he said so many people had had access to the building that he had been powerless to intervene. He said he'd resigned because he'd realized that an East German would be better suited for the job. He e-mailed me a photo of a short but adulatory 1992 reference letter from Jörg Drieselmann. (Drieselmann couldn't recall writing the letter but said it was possible he had.)

As for the Free University's Egyptology program, Fritz told me he'd quit because fields like real estate and business offered better job prospects. All the same, memories of his university years clearly rankled. He denied ever butting heads with Osing, but called him an "asshole" who seemed to take a perverse pleasure in humiliating students. He described the department as rife with backstabbers, and dismissed the entire field of Egyptology as a "pseudoscience."

He had even more scorn for critics of the Jesus's-wife papyrus, deriding them as "county level" scholars from the "University of Eastern Pee-Pee Land" who think their nitpicking of Coptic phrases can compete with scientific tests at places like Columbia University and MIT that have yielded no physical proof of forgery.

Fritz told me to call again in two weeks, and when I did, he said to check my inbox for an e-mailed statement. It read:

> Dear Mr. Sabar:
>
> I, Walter Fritz, herewith certify that I am the sole owner of a papyrus fragment … which was named "Gospel of Jesus's Wife" …
>
> I warrant that neither I, nor any third parties have forged, altered, or manipulated the fragment and/or its inscription in any way since it was acquired by me. The previous owner gave no indications that the fragment was tampered with either.

Over the next four and a half hours, Fritz told me the following story: He had first met Hans-Ulrich Laukamp in Berlin in the early 1990s, at a talk by the best-selling Swiss author Erich von Däniken, who'd become famous in the late 1960s for his theory that space aliens—or "ancient astronauts"—helped build the pyramids, Stonehenge, and other landmarks that seemed beyond the capacities of "primitive" man. Fritz said he struck up a conversation with Laukamp afterward—Laukamp bought von Däniken's theories; Fritz didn't—and continued it over beers at a pub across the street. He said Laukamp liked to sit in on classes at the Free University, and they had lunch together there. They did occasionally go to a sauna, he said, but that was after the von Däniken talk.

Fritz said Laukamp first told him about his papyrus collection in Berlin in the mid-1990s. Then, in Florida, in November 1999, Laukamp sold him the half-dozen fragments, for $1,500. Fritz photographed the papyri, conserved them between plexiglass, and placed them in a safe-deposit box, where they remained untouched for a decade.

In 2009, Fritz said, he was in London on a business trip when he stopped by the shop of an art dealer he knew. Fritz told the dealer he had some papyri to sell, and the dealer invited him to e-mail photos.

Fritz said he would have been happy to get about $5,000 for the Jesus's-wife fragment, but three months later, the dealer called and offered him some $50,000. Fritz e-mailed King, whose books and articles he had read: He wanted her to give him a sense of why a dealer would offer so much. But when the dealer heard that Fritz had approached an expert, he angrily cut off negotiations. In December 2011, Fritz traveled to Harvard to deliver the papyrus to King.

The story had an airtight logic. But it was nearly impervious to verification. In his original e-mails to King, Fritz had claimed that "someone in Germany" had translated the Jesus's-wife fragment in the 1980s, and that a Coptic priest had "recently" translated another of Laukamp's papyri. I would have liked to speak with either of them, but when I asked who they were, Fritz confessed that he'd in fact translated the fragments himself, using a Coptic dictionary and grammar book from his university days. He lied to King about it, he said, because he didn't want to be "embarrassed" if his Coptic skills had grown rusty.

I asked Fritz whether there was anyone alive who could vouch for any part of the provenance story

—the London art dealer, someone who had known Laukamp to collect papyri, or anyone who had seen Fritz with Laukamp at the von Däniken talk or at the Free University.

Did he have a single corroborating source to whom he could refer me?

"I don't," he said. "It's very unfortunate."

Video: Down the Rabbit Hole

I called Karen King later that day to ask whether we could meet. I wanted her perspective on what I'd found and was curious about how much she already knew. I wondered, too, whether any of it would color her view of the papyrus's authenticity.

But King wasn't interested in talking. "I haven't engaged the provenance questions at all," she said. What she did know, she'd already reported in her 2014 *Harvard Theological Review* article. "It's all out there," she said. "I don't see the point of a conversation."

I told her I'd spent months reporting in Germany and the United States. Didn't she want to know what I'd found?

"Not particularly," she said. She would read my piece once it was published. What interested her more were the results of new ink tests being done at Columbia.

Fritz told me he'd mentioned to King that we'd spoken. Before she cut short our call, I asked her why he'd never provided originals of his provenance papers—the 1982 Munro letter, the 1999 sales contract, the unsigned note that seemed to refer to the Jesus's-wife papyrus. "You're in contact with Walt Fritz," she said. "Why not ask him?"

All right, I thought.

But why hadn't she at least released her copies of Fritz's papers, as many scholars had requested?, I asked.

"I don't think they're good data," she said. Nothing useful could be gleaned from a scan of a photocopy, which was, after all, just "an image of an image."

I wasn't so sure.

Forensic specialists had told me early on that anyone with the technical skill to fake an ancient Coptic papyrus would have no trouble concocting modern-day provenance papers. But after reading a short history of manuscript forgery by Christopher Jones, the Harvard classicist, in last July's *New Testament Studies*, I wondered whether they'd gotten it backwards. "Perhaps the hardest thing of all to forge is provenance," Jones wrote. A manuscript is a physical object; to convincingly fake one, all you need are the right tools and materials. Provenance, however, is historical fact: a trail of dates, places, buyers, sellers. To convincingly fake provenance, you need to rewrite history—often recent history.

Fritz's contract for the purchase of Laukamp's papyri was dated November 12, 1999. When I asked Fritz where the sale had taken place, he said it was in the kitchen of Laukamp's home in Florida. But Helga Laukamp's son and daughter-in-law, the Ernests, had told me that Laukamp was at his dying wife's bedside at that time. He had brought Helga back to Germany no later than October 1999, the

Ernests said, after a Florida doctor diagnosed her terminal lung cancer. She died there two months later, in December, and Laukamp hadn't left her side, much less Europe. Laukamp "spent every day at her hospital bed" at the Heckeshorn Lung Clinic, in Berlin, Gabriele Ernest told me.

Later, at my request, Fritz e-mailed me a photo of his copy of Peter Munro's 1982 letter, about Laukamp's Gospel of John fragment. When I forwarded it to a close colleague of Munro's, he wrote back that the signature and stationery looked "100% authentic."

But later, I noticed two errors in the street address for Laukamp's Berlin apartment. Not only are the building number and postal code incorrect, but no such address existed. The letter, it seemed, warranted a closer look.

On the advice of a forensic document examiner, I sought as many of Munro's letters from the early 1980s through the mid-1990s as I could. Soon, scans were arriving by e-mail from a former doctoral student; a Dutch Egyptologist who has custody of Munro's archives; a Free University professor; and the same Munro colleague who initially thought the letter looked genuine—a position he quickly backed away from after seeing other Munro letters.

The problems were endemic. A word that should have been typed with a special German character—a so-called sharp *S*, which Munro used in typewritten correspondence throughout the '80s and early '90s—was instead rendered with two ordinary *S*'s, a sign that the letter may have been composed on a non-German typewriter or after Germany's 1996 spelling reform, or both.

In fact, all the available evidence suggests that the 1982 letter isn't from the 1980s. Its Courier typeface does not appear in the other Munro correspondence I gathered until the early '90s—Fritz's final years at the university. The same is true of the letterhead. The school's Egyptology institute began using it only around April 1990.

As a student of Munro's, Fritz may well have received correspondence from the professor—a letter of recommendation, for example, or a note certifying that he'd completed a course. It would not be difficult, the forensic examiner told me, to take an authentic letter, lay a sheet of new typewritten text across its middle, and make a photocopy. This might explain why Munro's typewritten name at the bottom of the letter is parallel with the stationery's design elements, while the rest of the text sits slightly askew. It might also explain why no original exists.

"The angels asked me to," Fritz's wife said of her decision to publish a book.

When I asked Fritz for explanations, he did some hemming and hawing but never sounded rattled. As for the date on the sales contract, he said Laukamp had returned to America—perhaps twice—after taking his terminally ill wife back to Germany. "She wasn't dying quite at that moment," he said, explaining why a man he'd previously described as devastated by his wife's diagnosis might have abandoned her on her deathbed. Fritz said he sometimes handled travel arrangements for Laukamp, and might even have records to send me as proof. I never received any.

When I brought up the 1982 Munro letter, Fritz cut me off. "I can't comment on any issues you have with that letter." He said he did not alter it in any way. "I received a photocopy from somebody, and that's the end of the story."

I persisted, going over the evidence point by point. Fritz told me that if the Munro letter was indeed a fake, the forger would have had "no clue" as to what he was doing. He emphatically excluded

himself from the clueless category: “I’ve always known where he lived,” he said of Laukamp. But he hadn’t noticed any of the problems, including the mistakes in Laukamp’s address, before I pointed them out.

I met Walter Fritz in person for the first time on a sunny, windswept Saturday in April, in Sarasota, Florida. After several days of long phone interviews, he’d agreed to have lunch and then be photographed for this magazine. He recommended we meet in St. Armands Circle, a shopping and dining hub popular with tourists, a 45-minute drive from his home.

I was looking over a restaurant’s outdoor menu board when Fritz broke through a swarm of tank-topped beachgoers. He had tightly cropped dark hair and wore a beige linen suit with a pocket square, tan wing tips, and aviator sunglasses. Fritz’s usual ride is a black Harley-Davidson Road King, he told me. But today he’d come in his Dodge Ram pickup, not wanting to muss his clothes for the camera.

Over lunch, he said he admired King’s tenacity: She had held her ground in the face of relentless hostility and skepticism about the papyrus, at no small risk to her reputation. But he felt she’d made a cascade of strategic blunders that had exposed his papyrus to undue scrutiny and animus. Among those missteps, he said, was her sensational title for it; her decision to announce it just steps from the Vatican; and her mention, in her *Harvard Theological Review* article, of the 1982 Munro letter, which—if found “fishy”—could be used to tarnish the papyrus.

“If you know you are going into a confrontation, you just don’t provide ammunition to the other side,” he explained of his preference for less disclosure. Though King’s approach was perhaps “the most honest thing to do, it just wasn’t very smart.”

Smart for whom?, I wondered. And why was honest the enemy of smart?

As for the porn, Fritz told me that he and his wife (whom he asked me not to name in this article) had at one point drawn about a third of their income from the $24.99 monthly memberships to their Web sites. But they took the sites down a couple of years ago in part because the business had started to take the fun out of the sex. He’d seen the movie adaptation of *The Da Vinci Code*, he said, but there were no links between their “hotwife” fetish, his wife’s automatic writing, and the papyrus. “Probably highly coincidental,” he said.

Later, his wife told me on the phone that she was clairvoyant and had channeled the voices of angels since she was 17. But she felt no kinship with the Jesus’s-wife papyrus or *The Da Vinci Code*’s story, and there was no special reason for the timing of the entries in her book of “universal truths.”

“The angels asked me to,” she said of her decision to publish it. “I’m here to do God’s service. If he wants me to write a book, then I’ll write a book.”

At one point, Fritz said he needed to disclose something: When he was a 9-year-old boy being raised by a single mother in a small town in southern Germany, a Catholic priest had gotten him drunk on sacramental wine and raped him in a room next to the altar. In April 2010, he wrote a letter about the episode to Pope Benedict XVI, a fellow southern German, whom Fritz felt was doing too little to address the legacy of sexual abuse by members of the clergy. Fritz sent me digital images of consoling letters he said he’d received from three Catholic officials—replies that left him unsatisfied.

parts fascination and disbelief.



"The Gospel of Jesus's Wife" papyrus (Karen L. King / Harvard / AP)

Within days, doubts mounted. The Vatican newspaper labeled the papyrus "an inept forgery." Scholars took to their blogs to point out apparent errors in Coptic grammar as well as phrases that seemed to have been lifted from the Gospel of Thomas. Others deemed the text suspiciously in step with the zeitgeist of growing religious egalitarianism and of intrigue around the idea, popularized by *The Da Vinci Code*, of a married Jesus. The controversy made news around the world, including an article in these pages.

A year and a half later, however, Harvard announced the results of carbon-dating tests, multispectral imaging, and other lab analyses: The papyrus appeared to be of ancient origin, and the ink had no obviously modern ingredients. This didn't rule out fraud. A determined forger could obtain a blank scrap of centuries-old papyrus (perhaps even on eBay, where old papyri are routinely auctioned), mix ink from ancient recipes, and fashion passable Coptic script, particularly if he or she had some scholarly training. But the scientific findings complicated the case for forgery. The Gospel of Jesus's Wife had undergone—and passed—more state-of-the-art lab tests, inch for inch, than almost any other papyrus in history.

But skeptics had identified other problems. Among the most damning was an odd typographical error that appears in both the Jesus's-wife fragment and an edition of the Gospel of Thomas that was posted online in 2002, suggesting an easily available source for a modern forger's cut-and-paste job.

With King and her critics at loggerheads, each insisting on the primacy of their evidence, I wondered why no one had conducted a different sort of test: a thorough vetting of the papyrus's chain of ownership.

King has steadfastly honored the current owner's request for anonymity. But in 2012, she sent me the text of e-mails she'd exchanged with him, after removing his name and identifying details. His account of how he'd come to possess the fragment, I noticed, contained a series of small inconsistencies. At the time, I wasn't sure what to make of them. But years later, they still gnawed at me.

The American Association of Museums' *Guide to Provenance Research* warns that an investigation of an object's origins "is not unlike detective work": "One may spend hours, days, or weeks following a trail that leads nowhere." When I started to dig, however, I uncovered more than I'd ever expected —a warren of secrets and lies that spanned from the industrial districts of Berlin to the swingers scene of southwest Florida, and from the halls of Harvard and the Vatican to the headquarters of the East German Stasi.

The owner of the Jesus's-wife fragment, whoever he was, had told King a story about where, when, and how he'd acquired it. But the closest thing he had to corroboration was a photocopy of a signed sales contract. The contract recorded his purchase of six Coptic papyri, in November 1999, from a

Fritz leaned across the table. He had a proposition for me.

Fritz described the effects of the abuse as less spiritual than psychological: his struggles with anger, his combativeness, his contempt for people he saw as intellectually inferior. He said he feared that if he didn't tell me about his letter, someone, perhaps at the Vatican, would leak word of it to insinuate yet another motive for forgery. He insisted that the abuse and the timing of his letter to Benedict—a few months before he contacted King—were unconnected to the papyrus.

I hated to question anyone's account of sexual abuse, but after everything I'd learned about Fritz, I didn't know whether to believe him. A few years earlier, I'd written a long profile of a man who'd been molested by a priest in a small Italian town and later became a hero to the community of abuse survivors. I wondered whether Fritz had read the article and seen an opening to my sympathies—or even to public sympathy. But I discovered that he'd reported the incident long before we met. A Vatican official confirmed that a high-level prelate had written to Fritz "on behalf of the Holy Father," responding to his "sad story." Church officials in southern Germany said they had a record of Fritz's allegations but knew of no other complaints against the priest, who died in 1980.

One thing did become clear, though. When we first started talking, Fritz had claimed that he had no stake in the papyrus's message. But I began to see that he in fact cared deeply. As a teenager he wanted to become a priest, he said, but he later came to believe that much of Catholic teaching was "bullcrap." Particularly flawed was the Church's claim that the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were truer accounts of Jesus's life than the Gnostic Gospels.

He pointed to the fact that almost no papyri bearing the canonical Gospels have been carbon-dated, because such testing would cause physical damage to the New Testament's seminal manuscripts—damage that institutions like the Vatican Library would never countenance. But with the new ink tests at Columbia—the ones King had told me about—scientists can date papyri without damaging them. Fritz said these tests could well show that most of the Gnostic Gospels were written *before* the canonical Gospels, making them better witnesses to the historical Jesus—a view that virtually no serious scholars share.

"All that discussion that the canonical Gospels were way before anything else—that's utter bullshit," Fritz told me. "The Gnostic texts that allow women a discipleship and see Jesus more as a spiritual person and not as a demigod—these texts are probably the more relevant ones."

Fritz had also told me at first that he didn't believe in his wife's spiritual channeling, but later he described her as strangely prophetic about everything from people's motivations to imminent traffic accidents. She's normally a terrible speller, he said, but her automatic writing is almost letter-perfect: "Something must be going on." He said his wife sometimes lapsed, unaccountably, into a language he suspected was Aramaic, the tongue of Jesus. "We tried to record it. It goes on for 20 or 30 seconds."

I asked when he had first heard her speak in this mysterious language.

"During sex," he said.

After the waitress cleared our lunch plates, Fritz leaned across the table and told me to shut off my tape recorder. I obliged, but continued taking notes. He wanted to keep this next part between the two of us, but I didn't agree, and he went on anyway.

He had a proposition. He had no talent for storytelling, he said, but he possessed the erudition to produce hundreds of pages of background material for a book—a thriller—that he wanted me to write. Instead of doing my own research, which could take years, I should rely on his. "I'd do all the legwork for you, and I wouldn't want anything in return."

The book's subject, he said, would be "the Mary Magdalene story," the "suppression of the female element" in the Church, and the primacy of the Gnostic Gospels, "maybe accumulating to a thriller story in the present."

It sounded an awful lot like *The Da Vinci Code*.

"People don't want to read Karen King's book" on Gnosticism, or the books of other academics, because they're too dense, he said. "People want something they can take to bed. The facts alone, they don't really matter. What matters is entertainment."

The book, he assured me, would be a runaway best seller: "A million copies in the first month or so." Our collaboration, he said, "could really make a big difference." But he insisted on the need for fabrication. "You have to make a lot of stuff up," he said. "You cannot just present facts."

"The truth is not absolute," he explained. "The truth depends on perspectives, surroundings."

I let him go on for a while, but I was stupefied. I was reporting a story about a possible forgery, and the man at its center was asking me to "make a lot of stuff up" for a new project in which he'd be my eager partner. It was a proposal so tone-deaf that either he was clueless, incorrigible—or up to something I couldn't quite yet discern.

I reminded him that I was a journalist; I wrote fact, not fiction. Nor could I accept favors from the subject of a story. But I was curious: What role would the Walter Fritz character play in this hypothetical book, whose underlying ideas, after all, would be entirely his? He gave me a quizzical look. "I wouldn't have a role in it," he said.

He wanted, that is, to be the invisible hand.

As I walked back to my car, I realized with something like a shudder that Fritz had hoped to lure me into a trap from which my reputation might never recover. I knew enough about his dealings with King and Laukamp to recognize all the signs: the request for secrecy, the strategic self-effacement, the use of other people for his own enigmatic ends.

Fame and fortune would rain down on me, he'd promised. All I had to do was lower my guard and trust him with all the important details.

Petra Krischok served as an interpreter for this article and contributed reporting from Berlin.

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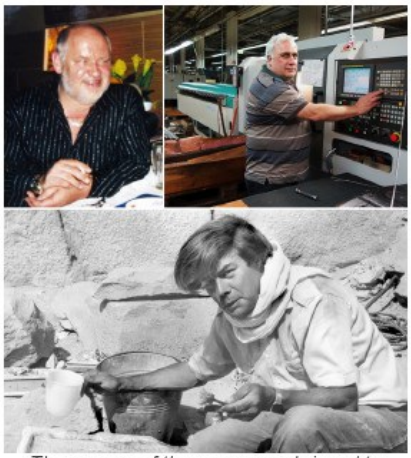
man named Hans-Ulrich Laukamp. The contract said that Laukamp had himself acquired the papyri in Potsdam, in Communist East Germany, in 1963.

The owner also gave King a scan of a photocopy—that is, a copy of a copy—of a 1982 letter to Laukamp from Peter Munro, an Egyptologist at Berlin's Free University. Munro wrote that a colleague had looked at the papyri and thought one of them bore text from the Gospel of John.

The only written reference to the Jesus's-wife papyrus appeared in yet another scan—of an unsigned, undated, handwritten note. It said that Munro's colleague believed that "the small fragment … is the sole example of a text in which Jesus uses direct speech with reference to having a wife," which "could be evidence for a possible marriage."

Perhaps conveniently, every player in this story was dead. Peter Munro died in 2009, the colleague he had supposedly consulted about the papyri died in 2006, and Hans-Ulrich Laukamp died in 2002. King thus declared the scrap's history all but unknowable. "The lack of information regarding the provenance of the discovery is unfortunate," she wrote in 2014, in an article about the papyrus in the *Harvard Theological Review*, "since, when known, such information is extremely pertinent."

But was there a lack of information? Or just a lack of investigation? The owner, for one, was still alive and had known Laukamp personally, King told me in 2012. In one e-mail to King, the owner wrote that Laukamp had "brought [his papyri] over when he immigrated to the USA." That suggested that Laukamp had sold them while living in America.



The owner of the papyrus claimed to have bought it from an auto-parts executive named Hans-Ulrich Laukamp (top left), who had gone into business with his friend Axel Herzsprung (top right). Laukamp had supposedly shown several papyri to an Egyptologist named Peter Munro (bottom) in 1982. (Clockwise: Walter Fritz; Ariel Sabar; Christian E. Loeben)

I searched public documents and found just one American city that had ever been home to a Hans-Ulrich Laukamp. In 1997, a German couple named Hans-Ulrich and Helga Laukamp had built a single-story stucco house with a swimming pool in the Gulf Coast city of Venice, Florida.

I tracked down people who had known the Laukamps, and they told me that the couple were chain smokers with almost no grasp of English; they were loners in a middle-income enclave of bike-riding "active seniors." Helga had worked in a laundry, and Hans-Ulrich was a toolmaker who had never finished high school—not the background I was expecting for a manuscript collector.

The Laukamps might never have left their small Berlin apartment were it not for a late-in-life reversal of fortune. In 1995, Laukamp and his friend Axel Herzsprung, a fellow toolmaker, went into business together. The company, ACMB Metallbearbeitung GmbH, or ACMB Metalworking, won a lucrative contract to make brake components for BMW and was soon drawing profits of about $250,000 a year.

Laukamp, then in his mid-50s, bought a Pontiac Firebird and nudged Herzsprung and his wife to build a vacation home next to his in Florida, where the Laukamps hoped to one day retire. But those dreams evaporated almost as soon as they landed in the Sunshine State. Helga was diagnosed with lung cancer, and Hans-Ulrich took her back to Germany, where she died in December 1999 at the age of 56. The company filed for bankruptcy in August 2002, and Hans-Ulrich died four months later, at 59, after lung cancer metastasized to his brain.

Looking over his company's public records, I spotted a peculiar detail. Four days after Laukamp's wife died in a Berlin hospital, his auto-parts company incorporated an American branch, using the address of an office building in Venice, Florida. What's more, Laukamp and Herzsprung weren't the American business's only officers. There was a third man, someone named Walter Fritz, who'd come to Florida from Germany at least four years before the other two and who would soon strike both men from the corporate documents, leaving him as the sole director of the American branch.

Walter Fritz still lived in Florida, and on paper he looked like an unremarkable local: 50 years old, married, with a single-story house in North Port, 30 minutes east of Venice. If Fritz stood out for anything, it was his civic ardor. He wrote eloquent letters to the editor of the *North Port Sun*. He led neighbors in a successful protest against overhead power lines. He was a regular at the 7:15 breakfasts of the North Port Early Bird Kiwanis Club. And when city commissioners gathered to hash out North Port's annual budget, Fritz—a tall, lean man with chiseled features and dark hair, to judge by a video of the meeting—sat through hours of tedious discussion for a chance to harangue the elected leaders about a proposed recession-year tax hike.

When I ran Fritz's name through a database of Florida incorporations, I found that the auto-parts firm wasn't the only business he had ties to. In 1995, Fritz had founded a company called Nefer Art. *Nefer* is the Egyptian word for "beauty." If someone close to Laukamp had an affinity for Egyptian art, that person was worth talking to: Coptic was an Egyptian language, and nearly all ancient papyri come from Egypt.

I ran *Walter Fritz* and *Egypt* through some search engines, and one hit caught my eye: In 1991, someone named Walter Fritz had published an article in a prestigious German-language journal, *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur*, or *Studies in Ancient Egyptian Culture*. He had used infrared photography to decode textual minutiae on a 3,400-year-old Egyptian tablet. The journal listed his affiliation as the Egyptology institute at Berlin's Free University—the very place that had also employed Peter Munro and his colleague who had supposedly examined Hans-Ulrich Laukamp's papyri in 1982.

I wondered whether the author of the article and the Florida auto-parts executive could possibly be the same man. I called several prominent Egyptologists, who told me that the article—which had reoriented a debate over whether Akhenaten and his father served alone as pharaohs or together as co-regents—remained influential. But none of them—not even the journal's former editors—could recall who Walter Fritz was or what had become of him.

I flew to Florida in November to learn more about Laukamp, but Fritz had come to seem almost as interesting. I planned to knock on his door with some questions. But when I pulled up to Fritz's three-acre lot, my heart sank: The property had no bell or intercom, just a forbidding gate at the end of a driveway that snaked behind a curtain of muscadine vine and Virginia creeper. A twitchy brown dog watched me from beneath a no trespassing sign. I idled my rental car outside the gate, considered my options, and then drove back to my hotel.

I called Fritz the next morning and told him I was in town working on a story about Laukamp and the Jesus's-wife papyrus. I asked to meet him. He abruptly declined, grew agitated, and made clear he wanted to get off the phone.

He had never studied Egyptology at the Free University, he said. He had never written an article for a German journal. Though the Web site for Laukamp and Herzsprung's business had listed Fritz as the president of its U.S. branch, he told me he was in fact just a consultant who had helped get the

company incorporated. He couldn't even recall how he'd met Laukamp.

But when I asked whether Laukamp had been interested in antiquities, Fritz bristled. "He was interested in a lot of things," he said.

Like what?, I asked.

"I know he had a beer-mug collection."

He then alluded, somewhat cryptically, to the question of the papyrus's authenticity. "There will always be people who say yes and people who say no," he told me. "Everybody is up in arms and has an opinion."

I asked him what his opinion was.

"I don't want to comment."

Are you the owner?, I asked.

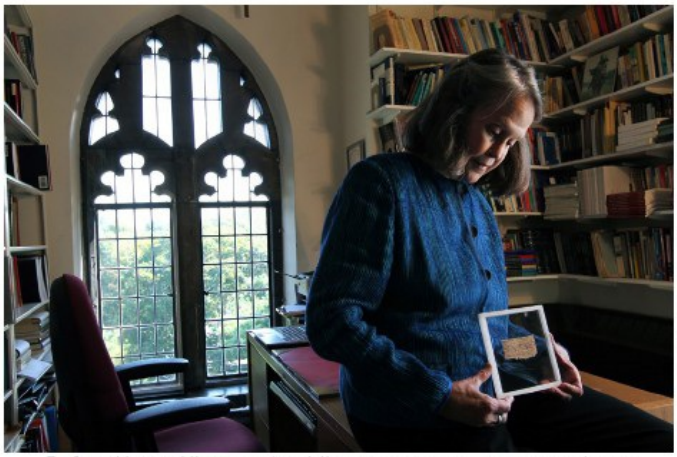
"No," he said. "Who said that?"

No one, I answered, but since he was one of Laukamp's few American acquaintances, I wanted to be sure.

He wasn't the owner, Fritz insisted. He had no idea who was.

Karen King is the first woman to hold Harvard's 295-year-old Hollis Professorship of Divinity, one of the country's loftiest perches in religious studies. The daughter of a pharmacist and a schoolteacher from a Montana cattle town, King enrolled at the University of Montana, where a course on marginalized Christian texts spoke to her in almost personal terms. "I already had this sense of not fitting in," King told me in 2012. "From grade school on, I was the kid who was picked on," she said. "I thought if I could figure out [these texts], then I could figure out what was wrong with me."

She earned a doctorate in the history of religions from Brown in 1984 and by 1991 had become the chair of both religious studies and women's studies at Occidental College. Harvard Divinity School hired her in 1997.



Before Karen King went public, an anonymous peer reviewer delivered a punishing critique. (The Boston Globe / Getty)

The Jesus's-wife fragment fit neatly with what has become her life's work: resurrecting the diversity of voices in Christianity's formative years. Early Christians were a disputatious bunch, with often conflicting views on the meaning of Jesus's life and teachings. But after Constantine converted the Roman empire to Christianity in the fourth century and Church leaders began canonizing the small selection of texts that form the New Testament, Christians with other views were branded heretics.

King has been particularly interested in

noncanonical, or Gnostic, texts that assign Mary Magdalene a prominent role as Jesus's confidante and disciple. Proof that some early Christians also saw Mary Magdalene as Jesus's wife would be a rebuke to Church patriarchs who had discounted her and conflated her, falsely, with two other women mentioned in the Gospels: an unnamed adulteress in John and an unnamed woman—thought to be a prostitute—in Luke.

From the beginning, King was up front about the puzzles the Jesus's-wife scrap posed. Its text spans 14 lines on the front and back, forming incomplete phrases presumably snipped from a larger manuscript. "Jesus said to them, My wife" is the most arresting line, but others are also striking: "She is able to be my disciple"; "I dwell with her."

In our interviews late in the summer of 2012, King said she expected a vigorous debate over the papyrus's meaning. She stressed that the fragment was all but worthless as biography: It was composed centuries after Jesus's death. It showed merely that one group of ancient Christians believed Jesus had been married.

Before going public, King asked some of the world's leading experts in papyrology and the Coptic language for their take on the fragment: Roger Bagnall, a distinguished papyrologist who directs the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World at New York University; AnneMarie Luijendijk, an authority on Coptic handwriting at Princeton who obtained her doctorate under King at Harvard; and Ariel Shisha-Halevy, a Coptic linguist at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. All three thought the papyrus looked authentic.

Some of the world's most prestigious institutions had been hoodwinked by forgers. King didn't want Harvard added to the list.

But others weren't convinced. In the summer of 2012, the *Harvard Theological Review* sent King's draft to peer reviewers. One was supportive, but another delivered a punishing critique of the papyrus's grammatical irregularities and handwriting.

I happened to arrive in Cambridge, to interview King, on the afternoon she received word of the unfavorable review. "There was a crisis," she said, apologizing for arriving a little late to our first meeting.

"My first response was shock," she told me over dinner that night. "My second reaction was 'Well, let's get this settled.' " She said that if her own panel of experts agreed with the skeptical reviewer, she would abandon her plans to announce the find in Rome. She knew how high the stakes were, for both history and her own reputation. Some of the world's most prestigious institutions—the British Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Louvre—had been hoodwinked by forgers, and she didn't want Harvard added to the list. "If it's a forgery," she told *The Boston Globe*, "it's a career breaker."

I was interviewing King in her office the next day when an e-mail from Roger Bagnall popped into her inbox. She lifted her glasses and leaned into the computer screen. Bagnall suggested that she revise her article to address a few of the reviewer's concerns, but he was otherwise unpersuaded.

"Yeah, okay!" King said, clearly buoyed. "Go, Roger!"

It was one of the assurances she needed to move forward.

The case for forgery, at first confined to lively posts on academic blogs, took a more formal turn last

summer, when *New Testament Studies*, a peer-reviewed journal published by the University of Cambridge, devoted an entire issue to the fragment's detractors. In one of the articles, Christopher Jones, a Harvard classicist, noted that a forger may have identified King as a "mark" because of her feminist scholarship. "Either he intended to find a sympathetic person or institution to whom to sell his wares," Jones wrote, "or more diabolically intended his fraud as a bomb, primed to blow up and to discredit such scholarship (or perhaps the institution) when it was exposed."

King never ruled out the possibility of forgery, but she continued to warn against a rush to judgment. More scientific tests were under way, and the similarities with the Gospel of Thomas were hardly incriminating. Ancient scribes often borrowed language from other texts, King wrote in the *Harvard Theological Review*; the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke—with their overlapping yet "theologically distinctive" narratives—were a case in point.

On a more practical level, she couldn't see how a con artist cunning enough to produce a scientifically undetectable forgery could at the same time be so clumsy with Coptic handwriting and grammar. "In my judgment," she wrote, "such a combination of bumbling and sophistication seems extremely unlikely." The crude writing, she argued, could simply indicate that the ancient scribe was a novice.

Yet "a combination of bumbling and sophistication" could well be the epitaph of many of history's most infamous forgers, their painstaking precision undone by a few careless oversights.

In the mid-1980s, a master forger from Utah named Mark Hofmann duped experts with manuscripts he claimed to have found that would have upended the official history of the Mormon Church. He used antique paper; made ink from historic recipes; and artificially aged his manuscripts with gelatin, chemical solutions, and a vacuum cleaner. But Hofmann was unmasked after a pipe bomb—which police believe was intended for someone he feared might expose him—blew up in his own car.

"One day [Walter Fritz] just disappeared," one woman wrote. "Is he still alive?"

Before he was caught, Hofmann made an estimated $2 million selling his bogus manuscripts. Young, shy, and self-effacing—*The New York Times* called him a "scholarly country bumpkin"—he targeted buyers predisposed, by ideological bent or professional interest, to believe his documents were real. He often expressed doubts about his finds, making experts feel they were discovering signs of authenticity that he himself had somehow missed. "Usually he just leaned back quietly and let his delighted victim do the authentication, adding now and then a quiet, 'Do you really think it's genuine?,' " Charles Hamilton, once the country's leading forgery examiner, and one of the many people Hofmann fooled, recalled in a 1996 book.

Reading about Hofmann called to mind the curious e-mails the owner of the Jesus's-wife papyrus had sent to King. In some messages, the owner comes across as a hapless layman, addressing King as "Mrs." rather than "Dr." or "Professor" and claiming that he didn't read Coptic and was "completely clueless." In other messages, however, he is far more knowing. He sends King a translation of the Coptic that he says "seems to make sense." He specifies its dialect (Sahidic) and likely vintage (third to fifth century a.d.), and asks that any carbon dating use "a few fibers only," to avoid damaging the papyrus. Also strange is that he tells King he acquired the Jesus's-wife fragment in 1997, then gives her a sales contract dated two years later.

When I called Joe Barabe, a renowned microscopist who has helped expose several infamous fakes, he told me that most forgers try to unload their creations on the unwitting; scholars are

usually the last people they want eyeballing their handiwork. So what kind of forger, I asked, might seek approval from one of the world's leading historians of early Christianity?

"A pretty gutsy one," Barabe told me. "You'd have to have a sense of *Can I get away with this?*"

After Walter Fritz rebuffed my request to meet in Florida, I called the *North Port Sun* and asked whether its staff had ever photographed him. A friendly reporter e-mailed me an image of Fritz surveying a mulch pile—the paper had covered his long-running crusade against a wood-chipping plant he felt was blighting the neighborhood.

I e-mailed Karl Jansen-Winkeln, a longtime Egyptologist at Berlin's Free University. Did he by chance know the Walter Fritz who'd written a 1991 article in *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur*?

Jansen-Winkeln replied that he did: Fritz had been a master's student from about 1988 until about the time the article was published. "He left the university without a final examination," Jansen-Winkeln wrote. "I have never seen him again after 1992 or 1993."

That night, I e-mailed Jansen-Winkeln the *North Port Sun* photo. Did this man look anything like the student he'd known two decades earlier?

Jansen-Winkeln's reply was waiting in my inbox the next morning: "The man looks indeed like Walter Fritz."

It was the first sign that Fritz might have lied during our phone call. I wondered why a promising student, a young man who'd landed an article in a premier journal early in his studies, would suddenly drop out of his master's program. I tracked down several people who'd known Fritz at the Free University, but no one had any idea.

"One day he just disappeared," one woman wrote, in a typical reply. "Is he still alive?"

Judging from public records, Fritz arrived in Florida no later than 1993. In 1995, he incorporated Nefer Art. The company's Web site advertised a peculiar miscellany of services: wedding photography, "erotic portrait photography," and "documenting, photographing, publishing, and selling your valuable art collection."

A page of uncaptioned photographs, titled "Gallery Art," included a relief of Pharaoh Akhenaten and a pietà, a sculpture of the Virgin Mary cradling the crucified Jesus. Also featured were fragments of two seemingly ancient manuscripts—one in Arabic and another in Greek.

I e-mailed the images of these manuscripts to a few scholars, who found them almost comical. The Greek one, which bore a drawing of a nude woman, superficially resembled texts from Greco-Roman-era Egypt known as "magical papyri." But the Greek words made little sense, the scholars said, and the script was more or less modern print. "Perhaps not in Times New Roman," Sofía Torallas Tovar, a papyrologist at the University of Chicago, observed drily, "but in a modern typography." The drawing of the female figure, meanwhile, was "in a style unparalleled to my knowledge in an ancient document, but easily found in modern school notebooks."

Two experts in ancient Arabic manuscripts told me that the script on the other fragment was backwards, as if someone had photographed it in a mirror.

What happened next felt almost too easy. I dropped Fritz's name and e-mail address into Google,



Walter Fritz (standing left, second from the top) in 1989 with fellow students on the steps of the Free University's Egyptology institute (Courtesy of Christian E. Loeben)

and up came a link to a site that tracks the history of domain-name registrations. On August 26, 2012—more than three weeks before King announced her discovery to the world, when only her inner circle knew of the papyrus and her name for it—Walter Fritz registered the domain name www.gospelofjesuswife.com.

It was my first piece of hard evidence linking Fritz to the papyrus. In January, I flew to Germany to search for more.

The taxi ride from Tegel Airport into the heart of Berlin was a blind slog through labyrinths of graffiti-clad apartment blocks, in fog and light snow.

On a cold Sunday afternoon, my interpreter and I showed up unannounced at the apartment of René Ernest, Hans-Ulrich Laukamp's stepson and closest living relative. Ernest and his wife, Gabriele, led us into their small living room and said they were mystified by what they'd heard about Laukamp's supposed ownership of the papyrus.

Laukamp had lived in Potsdam, in Soviet-occupied East Germany, as a child. As a young man, he fled to West Berlin by swimming across the Griebnitzsee, a lake on the border. The Ernests didn't know the exact date of the swim, but Laukamp's immigration papers suggest that it was in October 1961, two months after the Berlin Wall went up, when he was 18 years old. A friend of Laukamp's said he arrived in West Berlin with nothing more than his swimsuit.

The story of Laukamp acquiring six Coptic papyri in Potsdam in 1963 thus seemed to hinge on a dubious scenario: that not long after his illegal escape, he slipped back into East Germany, got the papyri, and then risked his freedom—and possibly his life—in a second illicit crossing to the West.

Another problem was that until Laukamp went into the auto-parts business with Axel Herzsprung in the mid-1990s, he'd been a humble toolmaker who didn't collect anything—not even beer mugs, the Ernests said, though they acknowledged his fondness for drinking. "If he had ever owned or bought this thing, after his third beer at the pub he would have told everybody about his great coup," Gabriele Ernest told me. "And if I knew my father-in-law, he would have immediately tried to make money from it."

I told the Ernests about the 1982 letter that the fragment's owner had given Karen King—the one in which Peter Munro tells Laukamp that one of his papyri might be a fragment from the Gospel of John. Could they picture Laukamp seeking a consultation with a university Egyptologist?

The Ernests gave each other a look, then burst out laughing. Laukamp had the minimum schooling required by German law, they said—the equivalent of eighth grade. His milieu was the bar on his street that served as his "second living room," not the college campus across town.

(When I reached Peter Munro's ex-wife by phone a couple of days later, she found the story just as preposterous. In 1982, Irmtraut Munro had been learning Coptic and studying papyri while working

Did the Lost Colony live at "Site X"? Clues point the way. pilotonline.com

The Virginian-Pilot
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Archaeologists excavate at Site X in Bertie County where they have found dozens of artifacts dating from the late 1500s.

- By Jeff Hampton The Virginian-Pilot

Archaeologists excavate at Site X in Bertie County where they have found dozens of artifacts dating from the late 1500s.

Sherds from pottery found at Site X, a tract in Bertie County the lost colony may have inhabited after leaving Roanoke Island.

ELIZABETH CITY, N.C.

Evidence is mounting that at least part of John White's lost colony may have ended up in Bertie County.

Archaeologists have excavated 850 square feet of the tract in question and found dozens of artifacts including bale seals used to verify cloth quality; 16th-century nails; firing pans from snaphaunce guns of the day; aglets used to form tips on shirt lace strings; tenterhooks used to stretch hides; pieces of pottery jars for storing dried and salted fish; and bowl pieces like those found in Jamestown.

The findings do not prove Lost Colony residents lived there, but they certainly show they could have, said Clay Swindell, archaeologist and collections specialist at the Museum of the Albemarle in Elizabeth City.

A member of the First Colony Foundation, Swindell reported last week on the recent findings and conclusions drawn from them at the North Carolina Museum of History in Raleigh. He shared them with a reporter Thursday.

The rural site south of the Chowan River bridge has been inhabited for centuries first by Native Americans, then early English settlers, Swindell said. Later it became the site of a governor's plantation. The ground is high and dry and lies next to the river, ideal for habitation.

"It's got lots and lots of different time periods represented," Swindell said.

A series of events led to the discovery of Site X. In 2007, a developer planned to build a large subdivision there. As usual, the state first required a search for historically significant sites or artifacts. A team found early English pottery and signs of a Native American village. Meanwhile, the development never panned out.

In 2012, researchers looking at a map that John White drew of eastern North Carolina in the 1580s found a patch covering what looked like a fort. The map is still preserved at the British Museum in London.

The fort symbol sat at the western end of the Albemarle Sound in what is now Bertie County, matching where the English artifacts were found.

"We put two and two together," Swindell said.

Before he left for England in 1587, John White told the colony to "remove 50 miles into the main." That clue did not help archaeologists much at first, since a 50-mile radius from Roanoke Island covers most of northeastern North Carolina.

"No one had a good understanding where the 50 miles might be," Swindell said.

The Bertie site lies 49.32 nautical miles (or 56.76 miles) from Roanoke Island, according to Google Earth.

Researchers are continuously discovering how the artifacts and writings may tie the Lost Colony to the Bertie site. The North Devon baluster jars used to provision ships with dried or salted fish were used in the late 1500s. The Surrey-Hampshire Border ware matches hundreds of pottery fragments found in early Jamestown, but was not used that much past the early 1600s. The explorers of the day wrote about the Chowan River and the tribes that lived there.

"That location is something they were familiar with," Swindell said.

John White was part of all three Walter Raleigh expeditions from England to the North Carolina coast. In 1585 and 1586, he made the map preserved at the British Museum. In 1587, he returned to Roanoke Island with a group that included his daughter, Eleanor Dare, and son-in-law, Ananias Dare. Eleanor gave birth on Aug. 18 to Virginia, the first English baby born in the New World. He left the colony shortly afterward to resupply.

White could not return until three years later. By then, the colony was gone. He found the word "Croatoan" carved in a post and CRO carved into a tree. The Croatoan tribe lived around Buxton.

Years later, Jamestown leaders sent a party south to search for the colonists, but bad relations with Native Americans hindered the effort. The party never made it to the Bertie site, Swindell said. The recent discoveries do not indicate a fort as was shown on the map, but only show evidence of a smaller group of early English there.

"We have new clues," Swindell said. "That's all we can say, there are new clues."

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Jeff Hampton has written about North Carolina for The Virginian-Pilot since 1997, focusing on the Outer Banks and northeastern North Carolina.

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Dinosaur-Era Bird Wings Preserved in Amber

Jun 28, 2016 11:00 AM ET

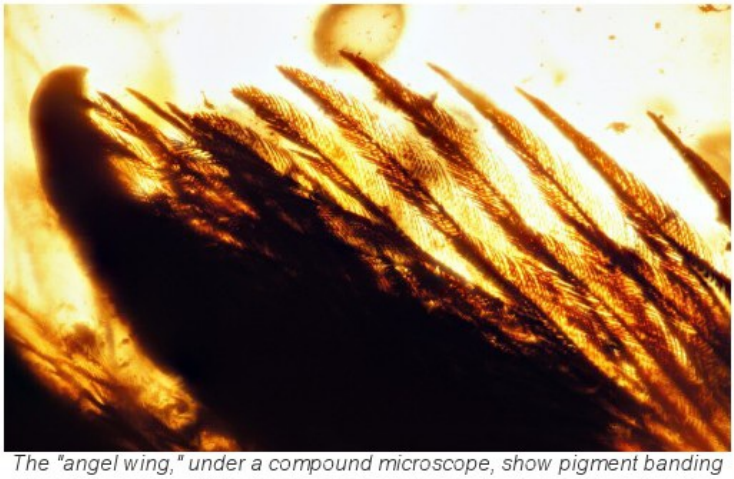
seeker.com

The fossils include the first examples of hair follicles and feather arrangements from the Cretaceous, revealing that both were about the same as they are today.

Photo: A 99-million-year-old wing from a toothed bird preserved in amber. The specimen includes a claw and a pale spot on the plumage. Credit: Royal Saskatchewan Museum (RSM/R.C. McKellar)

Two wings preserved in amber from dinosaur-era, toothed birds have just been discovered, a new study reports.

The 99-million-year-old wings -- nicknamed "angel wings" and "Rose" by the researchers -- include the first examples of hair follicles and feather arrangements from the Cretaceous Period, according to the paper, published in the journal Nature Communications.



The "angel wing," under a compound microscope, show pigment banding in feather barbules, and the outline of the Cretaceous bird's claw. Credit: Royal Saskatchewan Museum (RSM/ R.C. McKellar)

The wings belonged to enantiornithine birds, a lineage that died out with dinosaurs at the end of the Cretaceous (145.5–65.5 million years ago).



Image: An enantiornithine is partially ensnared by tree resin, based on the "angel wing" specimen. Credit: Chung-tat Cheung

"The discovery of enantiornithine wings preserved in Burmese amber provides a unique opportunity to observe these animals frozen in time with a new level of detail," co-author Ryan McKellar, curator of invertebrate paleontology at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum, told Discovery News. "These specimens are as close as we have ever come to examining parts of these extinct, toothed birds 'in the flesh.'"

McKellar, lead author Lida Xing and their colleagues found the fossils at a site in the Kachin Province of Myanmar. They examined the structure and arrangement of the bones and feathers in the fossils using techniques such as synchrotron X-ray micro CT scanning.

The scientists also compared the fossils with other prehistoric bird remains, which led to the enantiornithine identification. Usually only isolated feathers are found in Cretaceous amber, leaving uncertainty about the feather bearer.



The photography station at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum (Regina, Canada) used to capture the amber-entombed specimen images. Credit: Royal Saskatchewan Museum (RSM/ R.C. McKellar)

The researchers were also able to determine that the wings belonged to juvenile birds.



Photo: Down feathers from "Rose." Credit: Royal Saskatchewan Museum (RSM/ R.C. McKellar)

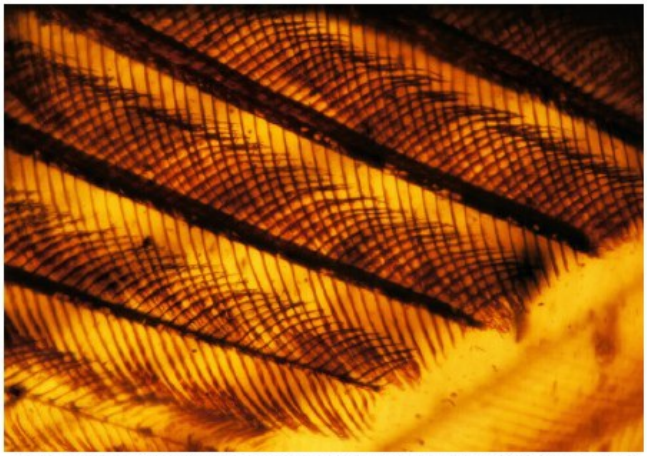


Photo: A compound microscope image shows flight feather barbs and interlocking barbules of the "angel wing." Credit: Royal Saskatchewan Museum (RSM/ R.C. McKellar)

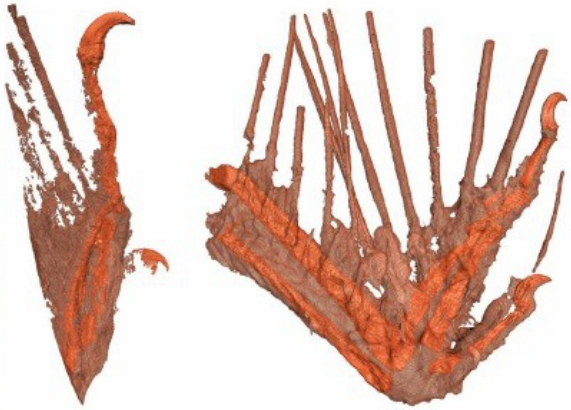


Image: Merged bone and soft tissue reconstructions of the wings in amber (synchrotron x-ray micro-CT data). Credit: Lida Xing

"The samples confirm that juvenile enantiornithines possessed adult-like plumage while they were still hummingbird-sized hatchlings, and that the arrangement and structure of these feathers were quite similar to those found in modern birds," McKellar said.

He says the feathers were so well preserved that they still retain color.

"The structure of feathers can be observed down to the finest branches (barbules)," McKellar explained, "and the preserved pigmentation provides us with a picture of dark brown wings with a pale spot or band on their upper surface, and pale or white undersides.

"I am particularly excited about this project because it provides the first opportunity to observe feathers in amber alongside skeletal material and identify the source with confidence."

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"Angel wing" pigment banding. Credit: Royal Saskatchewan Museum (RSM/ R.C. McKellar)

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The Disappearance of Ben McDaniel | Historic Mysteries

historicmysteries.com

Historic Mysteries

Jim HMay 24, 2016

Nearly six years have passed since Ben McDaniel disappeared while fresh-water scuba diving, and despite extensive (and expensive) search efforts, clues as to what happened to the (then) 30-year old Tennessee native remain sketchy and unresolved.

The oldest of three brothers born to Shelby and Patty McDaniel, Ben had endured a failed marriage, a bankrupted construction company that left him despondent. In addition, he was saddled with a hefty tax debt (est. $50,000), and he was still deeply affected by the 2008 death of his younger brother Paul from a stroke. Returning to his parents suburban Memphis home, McDaniel took up their offer to take a sabbatical to Santa Rosa Beach, Fla. where the family maintained a beach home. The move appeared to be beneficial as he gradually began to be returning to "normal," aided greatly by re-discovering one of his boyhood passions, scuba diving. He soon became a regular at Vortex Springs, one of Florida's largest fresh-water diving facilities.



Did Ben McDaniel die in an underwater cave or did he fake his death to escape his financial burdens?

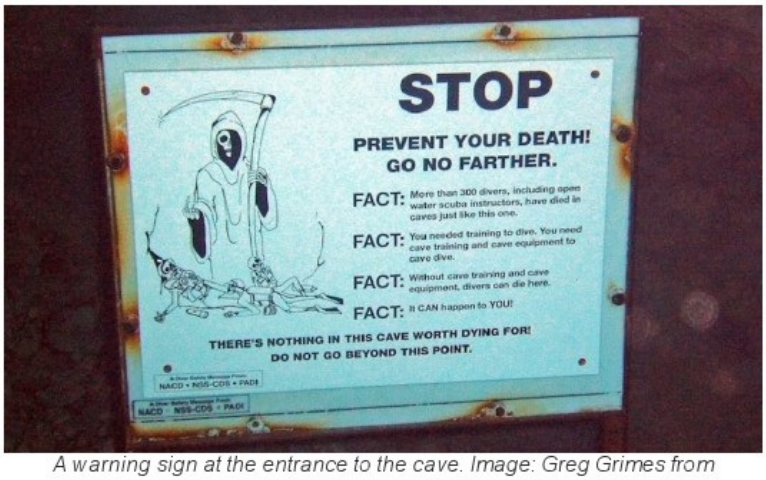
August 18, 2010 had been a typical hot summer day in the region, and at around 7:30 PM, McDaniel was seen by two other divers as he descended into the Springs, presumably headed for a cave, a popular attraction for divers, primarily due to the challenges it offered. The cave had a well-deserved reputation for being extremely treacherous, so much so that the state had debated banning it following 13 deaths attributed to it in the 1990s. In response, the owners had placed a sign at the cave's entrance discouraging further exploration. A second deterrent, a locked gate, was placed some 300 feet further into the cave. A key to unlock the gate was available at the dive shop, but was only given to certified cave divers, which McDaniel wasn't, but his presence at the facility had become commonplace, so one of the two divers (employees at the dive shop) who'd spotted McDaniel as he began his dive, followed him to the cave, unlocked the gate, then re-surfaced. He remains the last known person to see Ben McDaniel.

Two days later, when McDaniels' truck was noticed to still be in the parking lot, the Holmes County Sheriff's Dept. was notified, and following an initial search turned up nothing but Ben's keys, wallet (containing $700) and cellphone in the truck, word spread quickly and a detailed search began. The McDaniel family was contacted, and for the next three days, volunteer divers and cadaver dogs scoured the cave and surrounding swampland, with the only recovered evidence being two oxygen tanks discovered at the cave's entrance.



Ben McDaniel disappeared after presumably exploring an underwater cave in the Vortex Spring. Image: Paul Clark. (Vortex Spring (Holmes County, FL)) [CC BY 2.0]

Professional water rescue teams were brought in, but after 36 days of exhaustive search efforts, there were no positive results. The family then offered a sizable reward, but when a diver, ostensibly searching for clues, became trapped and died in the cave, an uproar ensued in the diving community, claiming that the reward had become too much of a temptation, endangering not only the safety of the divers, but also that of subsequent rescue efforts. The reward was then rescinded.



A warning sign at the entrance to the cave. Image: Greg Grimes from Starkville, MS, USA

Several theories have been proposed over the ensuing years, including foul play, McDaniel staging his own disappearance in order to escape his financial burden, and perhaps the most likely possibility, McDaniel becoming trapped, drowning and eventually being devoured by aquatic predators.

After six years, it's unlikely that the tragic saga of Ben McDaniel will ever be definitively uncovered, adding his name to the long list of unexplained disappearances that continue to baffle and mystify.

Sources

Wikipedia Ben McDaniel
Ben McDaniel – Unanswered Questions
The Disappearance of Ben McDaniel

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Dolly The Cat Is The President America Deserves

huffingtonpost.com

The perfect choice for those who think the other candidates are real dogs.

07/09/2016 02:49 pm ET

- Hilary Hanson Viral News Editor, The Huffington Post

This presidential candidate isn't racist or sexist, and she doesn't have any email scandals.

And while we hate to be superficial, she's *definitely* the cutest candidate in the running.



Vad 7/500px

WearWoof

Dolly, Pittsburgh cat and official mascot for WearWoof, a nonprofit dedicated to pets in western Pennsylvania, has announced her campaign for president of the United States, running on the platform #FixAmerica. And don't worry if that sounds a little too similar to the slogan of a certain orange man — by "fix," Dolly is talking about spaying and neutering your pets. Donations to the campaign go toward providing low-cost spaying and neutering services, as well as procedures for feral and stray cats through trap-neuter-return programs.



Vad 7/500px

WearWoof

"Health and behavior benefits aside, spay-neuter is essential to reducing the number of unwanted animals entering shelters every year," Nancy Lee, WearWoof founder and Dolly's campaign manager, told The Huffington Post. About 2.7 million animals in shelters are euthanized annually, according to statistics from the Association for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

And Dolly has a life story Americans can get behind. A former street cat, she went through the shelter system and ultimately established herself as a successful business-cat: she is the resident feline at the clothing resale store that funds many of WearWoof's projects.

We asked the tabby about her plans for the U.S. economy.

"The economy that I'm the most interested in is the Charitable Economy," said Dolly in a statement we have to assume was typed up by Lee. "Although we cats rule the internet and Americans spend over $60 billion a year on pet products and services, only a couple percent of the $300+ billion dollars donated to all charitable causes every year in the US go to animal causes."

OK, so maybe Dolly is a bit of a single-issue candidate. But while some other candidates have made impossible promises about what they'd do on their first day in office, Dolly is nothing but realistic about what her first move would be.

"After having my morning kibble topped off, I plan to stare at my food bowl with a scowl of contempt until ultimately turning away in pure disgust," she said.

Dolly 4 Prez.

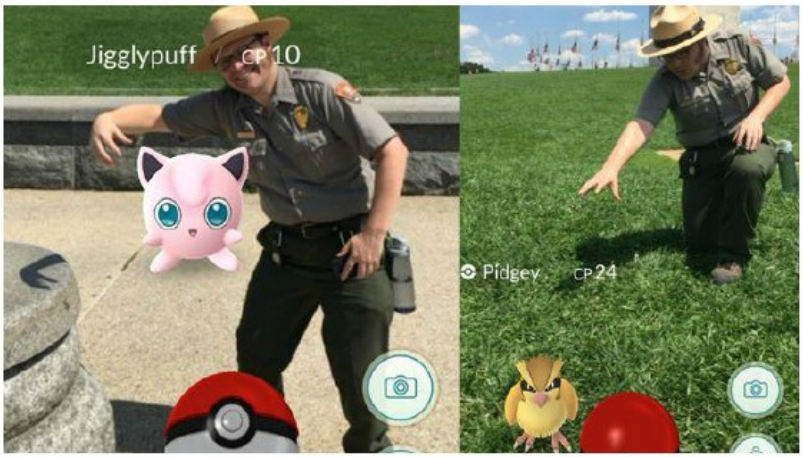
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Don't Play 'Pokemon Go' at Memorials, Officials Ask

By Blake Richardson
Published at 12:18 PM EDT on Jul 12, 2016

nbcwashington.com



Officials are asking "Pokemon Go" players to be respectful of the memorials as they hunt Charmanders and Jigglypuffs on the National Mall.

National Mall and Memorial Parks officials posted on Facebook Monday, asking players of the wildly popular new game to be mindful of just where they're hunting Pokemon.

"Yes, it might be tempting to go after that Snorlax near the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, or the Venusaur hanging out in the chamber of the Jefferson Memorial, but remember that there are places of solemn reflection here at the National Mall where playing Pokemon just isn't appropriate," the National Mall and Memorial Parks wrote.

In the "augmented reality" game played on smartphones, Pokemon characters move and disappear, so hunters can wait for them to dash away from a memorial to a more appropriate location before resuming the chase.

Memorials are not the only inappropriate places where people may be trying to "catch them all." The United State Holocaust Memorial Museum appears as a "PokeStop" in the game where players can find free stuff, The Washington Post reported.

National Mall and Memorial Parks officials said visitors are more than welcome to try and "catch them all" in other places, like the Constitution Gardens, where "a visitor had a close call with a renegade Zubat," according to the Facebook post.

And the officials said players should look out for upcoming Pokemon hunts led by park rangers to learn about the Mall while chasing Pidgeys.

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Monday, June 13, 2016

'Dont let them in!'

Nate wrote in to Darkness Radio to tell of something bizarre that he remembered as a kid:

> "I'm a 26 year old. I served in the Army from 2007 to 2012. I'm just a normal guy with a family and a house. I'm in no way odd or weird or anything like that. I'm sure if you ask my wife she'd say differently but that's a different story.
>
> So I was listening to your show the other night and I distinctly remember when I was around 7, there were two kids who came to my house and tried to make my mom let them in. These kids were no older than I was and they just didn't seem right. It's exactly as you described; odd clothes, flat voice. I didn't know them becuase I knew every kid on the three blocks from the left and the right. I remember trying to see them but my mom kept pushing me aside saying, *You need to go to your room, now!* I ran to my room with my brother and from the room could see the front door from around the corner and they were gone. I remember hearing my mom and dad arguing about letting them in and calling the police. My dad did not want them in the house and my mom was saying he was crazy and that they are just kids. That's why my dad yelled about the eyes. When my dad yelled about the eyes, my mom said they did not have black eyes. My dad is not a man that should ever be messed with. I'm just saying that he is a monster of a man, even now at over 60, you wouldn't mess with him. So, to scare him, that just doesn't happen.
>
> Well, that's when I hear a loud slam against my window and then another three or four knocks. I go back to the window, about to hold up the blinds to see what it was and my dad runs in and shouts, *Don't let them in!* and picks both me and my brother up and puts us in the bathroom. I hear him shouting to leave and that he will defend his family and that he has weapons. About five minutes later my dad comes in and he makes us leave the house for ice cream. He never talks about this and when you ask him, he gets quiet and changes the subject. The story is real. I'm not making it up."

Source: Darkness Radio - June 6, 2016

Transcribed by Jamie Brian

NOTE: I constantly receive messages from people who refer to the BEK or black eyed people phenomenon as 'urban legends.' Due to skepticism and the lack of tangible proof, many people believe that the claims are false and nothing more than just stories.

Urban legends are stories that can not be traced to a particular person, place or time. In order for a story to be categorized as an urban legend, the story must lack an actual eyewitness and can not be certified. There have been hundreds of eyewitness accounts that are verifiable and followed up with interviews.

Believe what you may...but these reports are not urban legends. Lon

Posted by Lon Strickler at 2:46 PM

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Gravitational Wave Detector Finds Double Colliding Black Holes — Again (Woot!)

By Calla Cofield, Space.com Staff Writer | June 15, 2016 01:15pm ET

space.com

http://www.space.com/33176-gravitational-waves-from-second-black-hole-collision.html

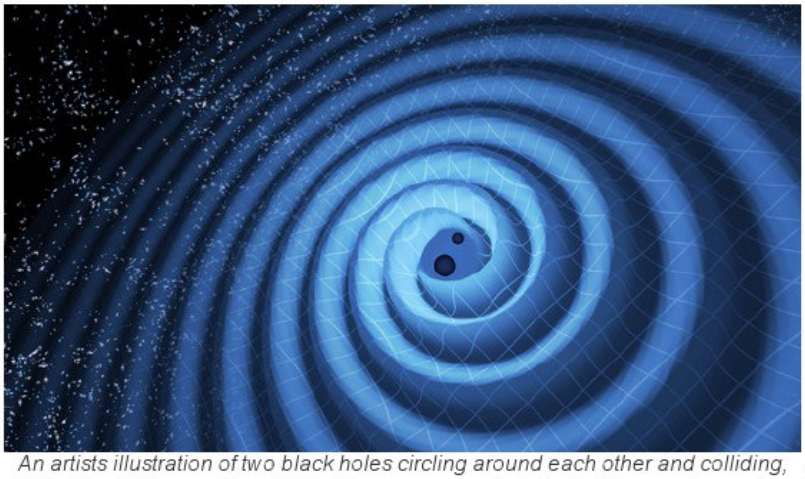
Distortions in the fabric of space-time, which were predicted by Albert Einstein a century ago, have been directly detected for the second time.

Approximately 1.4 billion light-years from Earth, two black holes spiraled around each other and collided, creating ripples in the fabric of space-time. These ripples, known as gravitational waves, arrived at Earth in December 2015, and were detected by the Laser Interferometer Gravitational Wave Observatory (LIGO).

The LIGO collaboration announced the finding today (June 15) during a news conference at the 228th meeting of the American Astronomical Society (AAS) in San Diego. The gravitational wave signal — officially known as GW151226 — was detected by LIGO on Dec. 25, 2015, at 11: 38 p.m. EDT (0338 a.m. GMT on Dec. 26). [Again! Gravitational Waves Detected from 2nd Black Hole Collision]

In the U.S., many of the LIGO scientists were still been celebrating Christmas Day when the news arrived, and it "destroyed a few family dinners," said Vicky Kalogera, an astrophysicist at Northwestern University and a member of the LIGO collaboration, in an interview with Space.com.

LIGO made the first-ever direct detection of gravitational waves in September 2015, and team members announced that finding in February. That first gravitational wave signal was also created by two colliding black holes.



An artists illustration of two black holes circling around each other and colliding, 1.4 billion light years from Earth. The merger created ripples in spacetime called gravitational waves. LIGO detected those waves in December, 2015.

An artists illustration of two black holes circling around each other and colliding, 1.4 billion light years from Earth. The merger created ripples in spacetime called gravitational waves. LIGO detected those waves in December, 2015.
Credit: LIGO

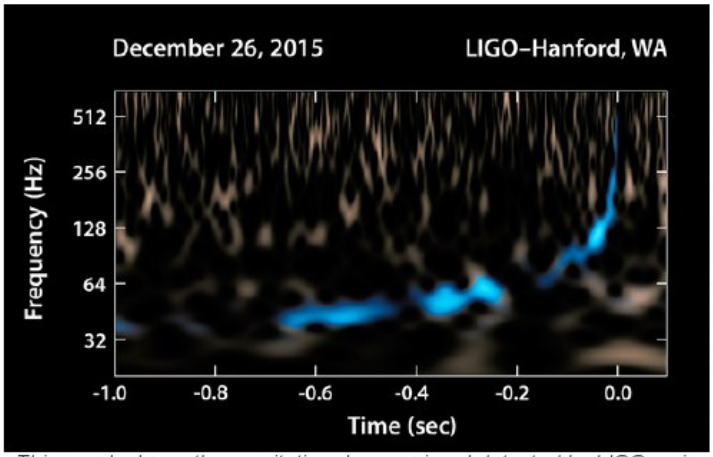
"The second discovery means the first discovery was not a one-off, 'we got lucky,' kind of thing," David Reitze, current executive director of the LIGO Laboratory, told Space.com. "If I could encapsulate what the second discovery means … it's that LIGO is for real."

LIGO scientists waited until now to announce the second detection because they had to make sure that it was real, and that it was caused by a black hole collision, team members said.

Warped space

Einstein showed that space is not a fixed stage on which cosmic events play out, but rather a flexible fabric, like a 3D rubber sheet. Space can be warped by gravity, so the mass of the Earth, for example, creates a curve in space. (Einstein also showed that time is par of this universal fabric, and he combined space and time into the single universal feature called space-time).

Black holes are the densest objects in the universe, and create intense curves in space-time. When two black holes move around each other very quickly, those curves in space become ripples, and move outward.



This graph shows the gravitational wave signal detected by LIGO on in December of 2016.

This graph shows the gravitational wave signal detected by LIGO on in December of 2016.
Credit: LIGO

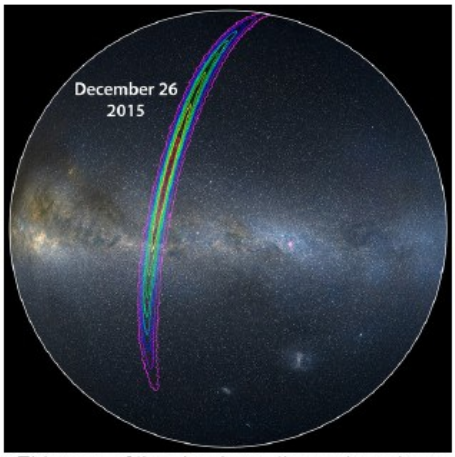
The black holes that collided 1.4 billion years ago weighed about 14.2 and 7.5 times the mass of the sun, according to a paper detailing the new finding, published in the journal Physical Review Letters this week. (The gravitational wave signal detected by LIGO in September was created by two colliding black holes with masses of about 29 and 36 times that of the sun.) [How Gravitational Waves Work (Infographic)]

Kalogera said the masses of the black holes provide clues about how they formed. Lighter black holes — those around 10 times the mass of the sun — very likely formed from two massive stars that lived close to each other, each perhaps siphoning material away from the other in a sort of cannibalistic relationship.

The fate of the two stars most likely followed a pattern seen all over the universe: Eventually the stars ran out of fuel, and their internal engines stopped burning. With nothing to keep them inflated, the stars collapsed. Following such a collapse, most massive stars will explode into a supernova, but at their core, the rapid inward rush of material drives up the internal pressure to the point that it creates a black hole. The gravitational pull of the new object is so intense, even light cannot escape.

The two black holes remain partners even after death, slowly spiraling around each other, eventually colliding. Einstein also showed that mass and energy are two sides of the same coin, and during this black hole merger, a quantity of mass "roughly equivalent to the mass of the sun was converted into gravitational waves," according to a statement from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, which operates LIGO in collaboration with the California Institute of Technology.

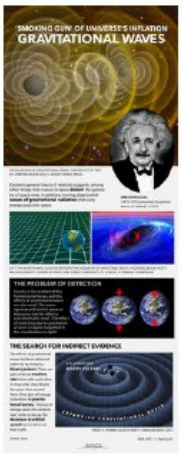
This map of the sky shows the region where the gravitational wave signal detected by LIGO in December, 2015, came from. The detectors are currently only able to narrow down the location of the signal source to an area spanning 1,400 square degrees of sky.
Credit: LIGO



This map of the sky shows the region where the gravitational wave signal detected by LIGO in December, 2015, came from. The detectors are currently only able to narrow down the location of the signal source to an area spanning 1,400 square degrees of sky.

The signal from the newly discovered black holes was slightly fainter than the signal detected in September. The faintness of the signal partly determines how well LIGO can narrow down the location of the event in the sky — the new signal came from somewhere in a region that measures 1,400 square degrees (the full moon is about one-half a degree on the sky). The September signal, which was "louder," came from a region measuring 600 square degrees.

Scientists hope to be able to narrow down the location of future events with the addition of more gravitational wave detectors, including the Virgo facility, located in Italy, which is scheduled to come online in January. The Virgo collaboration consists of 19 European research groups.



Moving masses generate waves of gravitational radiation that stretch and squeeze space-time. how gravitational waves work in this Space.com infographic.

Moving masses generate waves of gravitational radiation that stretch and squeeze space-time. See how gravitational waves work in this Space.com infographic.
Credit: By Karl Tate, Infographics Artist

A more sensitive detector

LIGO's first detection of gravitational waves back in September came immediately after a significant upgrade to the instruments, which increased LIGO's overall sensitivity. The observatory's detection of two double-black-hole collisions in its first four months of operation after the upgrade suggests that the observatory will be seeing more of these events in the future, Reitze said.

Black holes, true to their name, do not radiate or reflect light. However, in some cases, rapidly moving matter around a black hole will generate light and reveal the monster's presence to astronomers.

But as two black holes orbit around each other, any nearby matter is expected to be flung outward, like a cosmic salad spinner. According to scientists with the LIGO collaboration, that means these types of black hole pairs (those that are about 10 to 100 times the mass of the sun) are not expected to be visible to telescopes and observatories that see light or other particles.

"So far, gravitational wave detectors are the only way to see these kinds of systems," Reitze said. "So that's pretty exciting. I think we've opened up a window on black hole astrophysics that heretofore has not been opened."

(However, Kalogera added that the astrophysics community is open to the possibility that

observations of these black hole collisions will reveal surprises, including, perhaps, the discovery that they do create light).

LIGO consists of two facilities, one in Hanford, Washington, and the other in Livingston, Louisiana.

Each detector is an L-shaped structure with arms 2.5 miles (4 kilometers) long. A laser beam shines down each arm from the L's crux, and mirrors at the ends reflect the light back. If a gravitational wave passes through the detector, it warps space-time, lengthening one arm relative to the other very slightly — a change that the detector can pick up.

LIGO has been described by Reitze and other LIGO scientists as "the most precise measuring device ever built," and this sensitivity essentially requires that there be two detectors — a signal must be picked up by both detectors to ensure that it is not a false alarm.

Currently, LIGO is undergoing additional upgrades that will make it as much as 20 percent more sensitive than it was last fall (when the two detections were made), Reitze said. The improvements will allow LIGO to search for signals in a volume of space 1.5 to 2 times larger than before, according to the statement from MIT.

*Follow Calla Cofield @callacofield.*Follow us *@Spacedotcom, Facebook and Google+. Original article on Space.com.*

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Drinking at Yards Brewery can save local cats

By Sinead Cummings PhillyVoice Staff

phillyvoice.com

The brewery and a no-kill shelter are hosting a fundraiser

Yards Brewery and City Kitties have come up with the easiest fundraiser plan ever: drink beer, save cats.

One $40 ticket to the event (fittingly titled Drink Beer, Save Cats) at Yards includes all the beer you can drink, with a portion of the profits benefitting the West Philly no-kill, a volunteer-run nonprofit rescue shelter. Attendees will receive raffle tickets for a gift basket prize.

The fundraiser takes place next month, on Sept. 16, but nabbing a ticket early is recommended before they sell out.

Drinking takes place outside the brewery, with the hope that weather will change to early fall temperatures by mid-September.

A line-up of food trucks will be on-site for hungry attendees to grab snacks between beers.

2016 Drink Beer, Save Cats Fundraiser

Friday, Sept. 16
7-11 p.m. | $40 per person
Yards Brewing Co.
901 N. Delaware Ave.

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Trailer rolls down California highway sans truck

upi.com

By Ben Hooper | July 27, 2016 at 2:06 PM
Follow @oddnewsupi



There's something important missing from this trailer -- the truck. Screenshot: JukinMedia

BAKERSFIELD, Calif., July 27 (UPI) -- A man driving down a stretch of highway in California captured video of a moving trailer missing an important component -- the truck.

The video, filmed on northbound Highway 99 in Bakersfield, shows the filming driver approach what appears to be a perfectly normal trailer from the rear.

Advertisement

The car pulls up next to the trailer, revealing it's rolling down the highway without the truck that used to be pulling it.

The filmer said the truck driver apparently didn't notice the missing trailer at first and was spotted pulled over at the side of the highway about a half mile down the road.

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Case of Drone-Mounted Flame Thrower May Test U.S. FAA Authority

2016-07-19T17:07:41.923Z

bloomberg.com

July 19, 2016 — 10:07 AM PDT

- Connecticut teen mounted gun, flame-thrower to drones
- U.S. judge sides with FAA's request to investigate flights

The father and son who posted videos of drones firing a handgun and incinerating a Thanksgiving turkey with a flame-thrower can be questioned by aviation regulators, a U.S. judge ruled in a closely watched case that may determine the government's ability to oversee unmanned aircraft.

QuickTake Domesticating Drones

The FAA is investigating whether the flights -- which became an internet phenomenon on YouTube -- may have violated aviation safety regulations.

U.S. District Court Judge Jeffrey Meyer dismissed the arguments of Austin and Bret Haughwout, who maintained that the Federal Aviation Administration had no legal authority over the small drones because they aren't aircraft and the agency has no right to question them.

"I do not agree," Meyer wrote in a decision issued on Monday. The judge said "it is plausible to believe that the Haughwouts' devices fall within the definition of an 'aircraft' for the purposes of federal law."

Whether the FAA will be able to successfully bring an enforcement case against the pair from Clinton, Connecticut, is a separate matter, the judge said. He laid out the eventual arguments in what may become a test case over the limits of the FAA's authority over drones. The FAA argues that it controls the airspace down to the ground for purposes of overseeing drones, but Meyer questioned whether that is legitimate.

Authority Questioned

"No clause in the Constitution vests the federal government with a general police power over all of the air or all objects that leave the ground," he wrote. He stopped short of issuing an opinion on that, saying: "This case does not yet require an answer to that question."

The debate over where FAA's authority begins and ends holds enormous potential impact over the burgeoning drone industry, said Rebecca Byers MacPherson, a lawyer at Jones Day in Washington who formerly worked as an FAA attorney.

The FAA has traditionally avoided regulating aircraft below 200 feet because airplanes and helicopters rarely fly that low except at airports, MacPherson said. Drones, which fly in those near-ground zones, have led the FAA to claim authority closer to the ground.

Industry Impact

How the courts eventually decide that question will impact numerous industries, such as railroads and utilities that may not want unmanned aircraft hovering over their property, as well as individuals like the Haughwouts or neighbors who may fear for their privacy, she said.

Austin Haughwout, who had been a student at a local state college, created a sensation with his drone videos, first posting one last year of a quad-copter holding a black handgun apparently firing shots into a wooded area. It has been viewed more than 3.7 million times. Later last year, he posted a separate video entitled “Roasting the Holiday Turkey” showing a slightly larger drone holding a flame-thrower blasting a turkey on a spit.

The Haughwouts’ attorney, Mario Cerame, did not immediately return a phone call seeking comment. Cerame has argued that the FAA is overreaching in its investigation.

“You’ve got to stop for a second and think about what’s the jurisdiction of the FAA,” he told reporters after a July 6 hearing on the case in New Haven according to video posted by the Hartford Courant. “What do they have power over? Do they have power over what people do in their backyards on their own property? No one is saying anyone was hurt here.”

The case is Huerta v. Haughwout, 16-cv-00358, U.S. District Court, District of Connecticut (New Haven).

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Drunk partiers thought taking the chimney was a good idea

nypost.com

By Audrey Williams and Kenneth Garger

August 6, 2016 12:07pm

FDNY firefighters working to dislodge a man stuck in a chimney. Photo: William Farrington

A pair of tipsy partiers tried to slide down a Chinatown building's chimney, only to get trapped inside and need firefighters to rescue them out, authorities said.

The pair — Gregory Massuelle, 28, and Alexia Elodie, 25 — went to the roof of 17 Allen St. with the party host and third-floor building resident, to get a glimpse of New York's sunrise, law enforcement source said.

By 7:30 a.m. they were ready to head back downstairs and the two guests inexplicably decided the best rpiote to the third floor was via the building's chimney — which acts as the building's steam vent, authorities said.

They dropped down only a few feet before they got stuck in the tiny space. The party's host saw their plight from above and called for help.

Firefighters had to bust into a seventh-floor business — House of Marley, which sells Bob Marley memorabilia — to open a wall and rescue the drunken duo, officials said.

Elodie suffered some bruises, but refused medical attention.

Massuelle — a French-speaking man who was wearing blue jeans with no shirt — was taken to New York-Presbyterian/Lower Manhattan Hospital with minor injuries.



Man who got stuck in chimney Photo: William Farrington

Modal Trigger

A nearby business owner watched part of the rescue in disbelief.

"They were just having too much fun last night," he said.

The incident might get the hard-partying third-floor resident and building's owner in trouble with the city's Department of Buildings.

That's because 17 Allen St. is zoned strictly for commercial use, and any evidence of residential living there could bring fines of between $2,500 and $12,000, a Department of Buildings rep said Saturday.

The agency will take a close at 17Allen St., looking or evidence of anyone living there.

"An inspector will make the determination on what conditions must be observed that would substantiate illegal residential occupancy," a buildings department rep said.

A sign on the building's ground floor warns: "No loitering on roof! Roof is for emergency exit only, no loitering is allowed on the roof. Violators will be subject to termination of the lease!"

The listed owner of 17 Allen St. — who lives in Manhasset, L.I. — and the partying. third-floor occupants could not be immediately reached for comment on Saturday.

The building had been investigated before for the same complaint, in 2011, but "inspectors didn't find residential occupancy at the time," the Department of Buildings rep said.

There's been no probe or complaint about the building before this latest incident.



Man rescued from chimney in ambulance Photo: Umar Abbasi

Modal Trigger

Additional reporting by Khristina Narizhnaya and David K. Li

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DUI crash leads to bee attack

LAUREL COUNTY, Ky. (WKYT) -

wowt.com

WOWT - Content - News

By Garrett Wymer |
Updated: Fri 12:11 PM, Jul 29, 2016

Crashing a car was bad enough, but investigators say it led to two people inside the vehicle being attacked by a swarm of bees from a disturbed hive.



It happened Tuesday night in Laurel County, Kentucky. Neighbors along the road were still, well, buzzing about it on Wednesday afternoon.

"I just had got done feeding my chickens - watering them and stuff - and I walked back to my house there to get my phone so I could play a video game on it," said Gary Lee Anderson, who lives on the road and saw it all happen. "And all of a sudden I heard a big 'boom,' and I looked back out my door and the electric pole fell and the lines were falling. And the GeoTracker was sideways into the fence."

Then the folks inside the car, who investigators identified as Noah Elkins, 36, of East Bernstadt, and Priscilla Simpson, 35, of Dry Ridge, got a big surprise.

"He didn't know it, but he found out, that there was a hive of bees there," said Deputy Gilbert Acciardo with the Laurel County Sheriff's Office, "and he had disturbed them."

"And the guy came out, screaming and squalling, and running around about like a chicken with its head cut off," Anderson said.

Then Anderson says they ran up the road, grabbed a hose outside his home and started trying to spray off the bees.

"I told him, 'You need to get out of that water,'" Anderson said, "but I didn't know he was getting eat up by bees, I thought he was just high."

Deputies say Elkins and Simpson were under the influence. Simpson told them that she and Elkins had taken several drugs, including Suboxone, neurotin and Klonopin, investigators said.

Investigators said they had driven down the road looking for a place to swim.

"That girl in that little bikini, she had little red dots all over her," Anderson said.

Even Anderson got stung while he was out there.

Elkins and Simpson were taken to the hospital for treatment for injuries from the crash and for

"numerous" bee stings, deputies said.

Elkins was cited for driving under the influence, as well as other traffic violations. Simpson was charged with public intoxication. Needless to say, investigators call it an unusual case. But everyone around there hopes the two learned a serious lesson.

"I'd say by today they are [learning their lesson]," Anderson said. "If they feel like my leg feels, I'd say they're learning.

"I'd say they're itching real good," he said. "Because my ankle's itching. I think it's that poison from them bees."

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Durham Cathedral opens hidden treasures and spaces to public

Harriet Sherwood Religion correspondent
Thursday 21 July 2016 Last modified on Thursday 21 July 2016

theguardian.com

New permanent exhibition at world heritage site charts history of Christianity in north-east, with St Cuthbert's coffin on show from next year



The Open Treasure exhibition at Durham Cathedral. Photograph: David James Wood/David Wood The vaulted stone roof of the monastery's great kitchen. Photograph: David James Wood/David Wood Some of the silverware on display in the Open Treasure exhibition. Photograph: David James Wood Photographger 2015

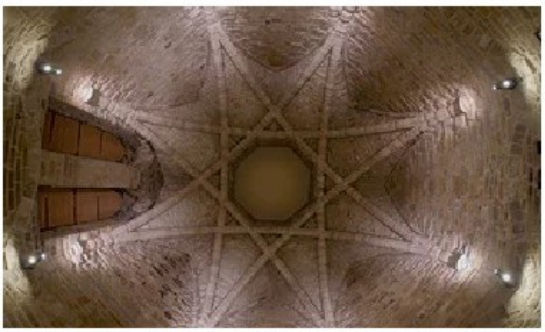
A vast 14th-century monks' dormitory with original oak-beamed ceiling is the centrepiece of a £10.9m permanent exhibition charting Christian history and culture in the north-east of England, which opens to the public at Durham Cathedral at the weekend.

Artefacts dating from the 3rd century onwards, including burial stones, preaching crosses and medieval manuscripts – some of which have never before been displayed – will be on show at Open Treasure, which opens on Saturday.

Next year, the coffin and cross of St Cuthbert, the 7th century missionary monk who travelled through northern England, are due to be put on display in climate-controlled conditions under a soaring vaulted stone roof that was once in the monastery's great kitchen. Cuthbert's remains are buried in the cathedral grounds.

"It has been an incredibly complex project, and I am in awe and wonder of the splendours of this space. This is a seminal moment in the life of the cathedral," said Andrew Tremlett, the new dean of Durham Cathedral, who took up his post last Sunday. The exhibition tells "the history and culture which has shaped the north-east of England", he added.

Open Treasure, which has taken more than three years to create, opens up hidden spaces within the cathedral – which itself is a Unesco world heritage site along with the adjacent castle – that were previously inaccessible to visitors.



The vaulted stone roof of the monastery's great kitchen. Photograph: David James Wood/David Wood Some of the silverware on display in the Open Treasure exhibition. Photograph: David James Wood Photographger 2015

The medieval dormitory, once housing dozens of sparse, narrow cubicles in which Benedictine monks slept and studied, became a library in the 19th century. Now it combines ancient artefacts with interactive technology to allow visitors to smell the scents of monastic life, such as tallow, beeswax, incense and malted barley.

The exhibition charts the monks' days, which began at 6am and ended with strict silence from 7.30pm, while their nights were interrupted by an hour of prayer from midnight. They subsisted on a diet of mostly fish and bread.

A collections gallery, hermetically sealed with airlock doors, provides carefully controlled environmental conditions for fragile items in their glass display cabinets – including fish bones found embedded in the floor of the great kitchen and unexpectedly

worldly betting slips found in the monks' quarters.

The roof stones of the octagonal kitchen, which contains eight fireplaces, have been carefully cleaned. A large central display cabinet, currently containing the cathedral's plate collection, will next year become the home of Cuthbert's highly decorated but battered coffin once tests have been carried out to ensure visitors won't upset the controlled climate.

The Normans began building a hilltop monastery in 1093 on the site of Cuthbert's shrine at Durham. It was surrendered to the crown in 1539 during the reformation, but re-founded two years later. In 1650, the cathedral was closed for worship when Oliver Cromwell incarcerated 3,000 Scottish soldiers there after the Battle of Dunbar. Mass graves containing many of the soldiers' bodies were discovered in 2013.



The vaulted stone roof of the monastery's great kitchen. Photograph: David James Wood/David Wood Some of the silverware on display in the Open Treasure exhibition. Photograph: David James Wood Photographger 2015

"The exhibition will locate Durham Cathedral in an unbroken timeline from the 9th century to the present day," said Tremlett. "Visitors will get a sense of being connected to history."

Cathedral officials hope that 120,000 of the cathedral's annual 750,000 visitors will buy tickets for Open Treasure, which will cost £7.50 for adults and £2.50 for children.

The cathedral has running costs of about £10,000 per day, said Ivor Stolliday, its treasurer, and an additional £40m is needed over the next 15 years to repair and renovate the building. "The exhibition is designed to create a surplus to help with the very considerable costs of the cathedral," said Stolliday.

Tremlett, previously vice-dean of Westminster Abbey, which charges adults £20 to enter, said that only 15% of the London cathedral's visitors were from the UK.

"At Durham, the vast majority of visitors are UK citizens – so we have more Britons visiting here than Westminster Abbey. If we can maintain Durham cathedral as free to enter while also generating revenue, that's the best of both worlds," he said.

On Thursday, the government announced grants of £14.5m for urgent repairs to Church of England and Catholic cathedrals in England. Thirty-two cathedrals will receive sums of between £15,000 and £870,000, with the largest grant going to Coventry Cathedral. Durham was not among the recipients.

"Cathedrals are the beating hearts of their communities, offering sanctuary, beauty, collective history, and social and economic support to people of every generation," said Fiona Reynolds, chair of the Cathedrals Fabric Commission for England.

Cathedrals were "jewels in the centres of their cities" and showcases to the nation, she added.

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Eagle tries to carry off Australian boy - BBC News

bbc.com

BBC

http://www.bbc.com/news/world-australia-36771205



An eagle attempted to lift a little boy into the air during a bird show at Alice Springs in Australia

Image copyrightChristine O'Connell / Instagram: 55chris

A wedge-tailed eagle tried to fly away with a terrified boy at a popular wildlife show in central Australia.

A crowd of stunned onlookers watched the enormous bird latch its talons on to the screaming boy's head during a show at Alice Springs Desert Park.

Witnesses said the bird attempted to pick him up "like a small animal".

The boy - believed to be between six and eight years old - escaped with a "superficial" gash to his face.

Christine O'Connell from Horsham in Victoria state was visiting the park with her husband on 6 July when the attack occurred.

She told the BBC the eagle flew straight for the boy from about 15m away.

Image caption

"A fellow who was sitting closer said the little boy kept running his zipper up and down," said Mrs O'Connell, who caught the attack on her camera.

Distracted by the noise, the eagle grabbed the boy's green hoodie and attempted to him lift away before park staff moved in, Mrs O'Connell said.

The attack left the boy crying and bleeding, but his injuries were not severe.

A Victorian man who was in the crowd, Keenan Lucas, told the NT News the show was ended quickly after the attack.

"We're at the bird show in the afternoon, having a great time and looking forward to seeing the wedge-tailed eagle come out for the finale," he said.

Image copyright Christine O'Connell / Instagram: 55chris
Image caption The boy suffered minor injuries in the attack and was taken for medical treatment

"The bird then flew over the crowd and tried to grab on to a young boy's head. He screamed, the mother was distraught and the presenters wrapped up the show very quickly."

The park issued a statement to the media after being contacted about the event.

"On Wednesday, 6 July, an incident occurred at the Alice Springs Desert Park where an eagle made contact with an audience member," the park said in a statement.

"A thorough investigation regarding the circumstances behind this incident is under way and the eagle will be removed from the show while this investigation is ongoing."

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Image copyright Christine O'Connell / Instagram: 55chris

'Earthquake' reported off Florida waters was really a Navy test

By

news-journalonline.com

Daytona Beach News-Journal Online

Remember all that social media buzz over the weekend about an earthquake off the coast of Daytona Beach? Never mind.

It appears the “earthquake” detected on Saturday by seismographs as far away as Venezuela and across the United States and Caribbean was triggered by a manmade explosion designed to test the seaworthiness of a new U.S. Navy vessel.

A similar 3.7 magnitude “earthquake” was reported by the U.S. Geological Survey on June 10, 156 nautical miles east-northeast of Ormond-by-the-Sea. That was the same day the Navy reported conducting a shock trial on the USS Jackson, headquartered at Mayport for testing. Shock trials test a ship’s ability to withstand the effects of underwater explosions and remain seaworthy.

On Saturday, the Geological Survey again reported a 3.7 magnitude “earthquake” around 4 p.m. about 168 nautical miles east-northeast of Daytona Beach Shores.

The Navy had notified the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s National Marine Fisheries Service that another shock trial was going to be conducted between July 16 and July 20, depending on the weather.

Asked about the reported earthquake on Monday, Dale Eng, a public information officer for the Navy’s Sea Systems Command in Washington, said the Navy is working on a statement it expects to release this week.

Seismographs as far away as Minnesota, Texas and Oklahoma, as well as along the coast of Florida, Georgia and North Carolina, registered the event on Saturday, said Bruce Presgrave, a geophysicist and shift supervisor at the Geological Survey's National Earthquake Information Center in California.

Upon seeing the photo Monday of the June 10 shock trail on the News-Journal's website Presgrave said, "That's a smoking gun, isn't it?"

Presgrave planned to contact the Navy to learn more about the charges used in the shock trials as part of the agency's ongoing investigation.

A large underwater explosion "would almost certainly be detected as an earthquake," he said.

Sound travels particularly well in a layer of ocean water known as the SOFAR channel, short for Sound Fixing and Ranging Channel, he said, adding that it "lets sound waves travel a long way away, a lot farther than we would expect."

Because the shock trials happen underwater, the SOFAR channel would be a "very good amplifier," producing the strong signals seen along the coast on Saturday, Presgrave said. "Even at the sea floor, they would help put a good bit of energy into the ground."

The detection inland would indicate it's "a pretty big explosion."

A permit from the Fisheries Service for Navy maneuvers between 2013 and 2018 stated explosions to conduct shock trials on vessels east of Jacksonville could include a 10,000-pound charge and a 40,000-pound charge.

The USS Jackson, commissioned last December, is one of the Navy's new Independence class of littoral combat ships, which will conduct anti-submarine, surface and mine countermeasure operations around the globe, the Navy has reported. They're "designed to defeat threats in coastal waters where increasingly capable submarines, mines and swarming small craft operate."

A statement from Jackson's manufacturer, Austal USA, on July 4 said two shock trials had taken place and one other was planned. The company warned its investors that additional modifications were determined necessary after the initial shock trials, requiring a "downward adjustment" to the company's planned revenue.

Following the shock trials, the Navy has stated, the Jackson will join sister ships in San Diego.

The Navy, according to the permit, is required to have at least 10 marine mammal observers on board aircraft or multiple vessels during the exercise. The marine mammal stranding network along the Southeast coast has been advised to be on the lookout for any unusual marine mammal strandings.

The Fisheries Service reported that a team of observers found no mortalities, injuries to or strandings of marine mammals or sea turtles in 2008 during similar testing on the USS Mesa Verde.

Monday

Posted Jul 18, 2016 at 3:20 PM Updated Jul 18, 2016 at 7:50 PM

Remember all that social media buzz over the weekend about an earthquake off the coast of Daytona Beach? Never mind.

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United for a night, Republicans nominated Donald Trump Tuesday as their presidential standard-bearer, capping the billionaire businessman's stunning takeover of the GOP and propelling him into

a November faceoff with Democrat Hillary Clinton.

The U.S. Navy confirmed Tuesday that ship shock trials with 10,000 pounds of explosives were conducted on Saturday and earlier in June, on the same dates as earthquake reports in the Atlantic Ocean off the Florida coast.

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Elephant sedative emerges as new threat in overdose battle

ap.org

By KANTELE FRANKO
Jul. 28, 2016 6:06 PM EDT

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — A drug used to sedate elephants and other large animals, 100 times as potent as the fentanyl already escalating the country's heroin troubles, is suspected in spates of overdoses in several states, where authorities say they've found it mixed with or passed off as heroin.

The appearance of carfentanil, one of the most potent opioids known to investigators, adds another twist to the fight against painkillers in a country already awash in heroin and fentanyl cases.

Each time authorities start to get a handle on one type of drug, another seems to pop up, said Joseph Pinjuh, chief of the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force and narcotics unit for the U.S. attorney in Cleveland.

"You feel like a kid with his finger in the dike, you know?" he said. "We're running out of fingers."

A man suspected of selling carfentanil as heroin was indicted this week in central Ohio on 20 counts, including murder, in connection with a July 10 death and nine other overdoses that happened within hours of one another. Some of the surviving users told investigators they thought they were buying heroin, but testing found none, Franklin County prosecutor Ron O'Brien said. The suspect, Rayshon Alexander, pleaded not guilty.

Investigators are trying to track down the source of the carfentanil. Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine said he was unaware of any thefts of the drug, which, he noted, could be shipped from abroad or produced here.

Chinese companies sell carfentanil online, but it hasn't shown up much in the U.S. drug supply, according to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. There hasn't been much evidence of carfentanil on the streets or in testing related to criminal cases, said agent Rich Isaacson, a spokesman for the DEA's Detroit Division, which covers Ohio.

The drug has been suspected in overdoses or found in seized drugs in central Kentucky, in Florida's Tampa Bay and Sarasota areas and in other Ohio cities. Akron authorities have seen more than 230 overdoses in July, 20 of them fatal, and police said evidence of carfentanil was found in some of those.

The drug is thought to be similar in strength to a painkiller known as W-18, which has shown up in heroin in Philadelphia, New England and Canada. Such drugs up the ante in a market where sellers already mix powerful painkillers with or disguise them as heroin to increase their products' potency, which can increase overdose risks for users, especially when they're unaware of what they're using.

A traditional businessman might conclude that killing his customers is bad for business, but dealers looking to increase profits can find a burst of overdoses to be a boon, helping to draw customers to their product, Pinjuh said.

"They know that's the high that'll take you right up to the edge, maybe kill you, maybe not," he said. "That's the high that they want."

Carfentanil is so powerful that zoo veterinarians typically wear face shields, gloves and other protective gear — "just a little bit short of a hazmat suit" — when preparing the medicine to sedate animals because even one drop splattered into a person's eye or nose could be fatal, said Dr. Rob Hilsenroth, executive director of the American Association of Zoo Veterinarians.

A loaded syringe of a reversal drug is kept on hand just in case, and the extremely limited carfentanil supply regulators allow for such facilities is kept locked away and subject to auditing, Hilsenroth said.

Investigators are taking the risks seriously. In a bulletin to law enforcement agencies last week, DeWine's office discouraged police from field-testing suspected heroin or fentanyl for fear it contains carfentanil or other potentially harmful synthetic opioids. Instead, the office recommended sending samples straight to a lab for testing.

DeWine said drugs used for animals have showed up in street drugs before, but carfentanil is so new on the investigative scene that the state's crime lab didn't even have a standard for comparing samples.

In some suspected carfentanil cases, emergency responders have had to administer multiple doses of the overdose antidote naloxone, often known by the brand name Narcan, to save people, but even the antidote might not be enough.

Dr. Lakshmi Sammarco, the Hamilton County coroner in Cincinnati, publicly warned users during a recent news conference: "Narcan may not save you on this one."

AP News | © 2016 Associated Press |

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Girl dies after elephant throws stone in Morocco zoo - BBC News

bbc.com

BBC • 28 July 2016



An onlooker filmed the elephant moments after it threw the stone

Image copyrightjadid247

A seven-year-old girl has died after being hit by a stone thrown by an elephant from its enclosure at Rabat Zoo in Morocco.

The stone got past the elephant's fence and a ditch separating the animal and visitors, the zoo said in a statement.

The girl was taken to hospital and died within a few hours, the zoo added.

The zoo statement said the enclosure met international standards and said "this kind of accident is rare, unpredictable and unusual".

Africa Live: More on this and other stories

The statement went on (in French) to point out two other recent incidents in the US:

- In June an alligator killed a two-year-old boy at Walt Disney World in Florida
- In May, zookeepers killed a gorilla at Cincinnati Zoo after a three-year-old boy fell into its enclosure.

Phyllis Lee, Scientific Director of the Amboseli Trust for Elephants, says that targeted throwing of stones and branches by elephants is very unusual.

"It can happen when elephants are frustrated or bored. In my opinion, it's unlikely the elephant was directly targeting the girl - but exhibiting frustration. You can't predict what animals in captivity will do."

The moments after the girl was struck at Rabat Zoo on Tuesday were filmed by a bystander and uploaded onto YouTube.

The video shows the elephant waving its trunk behind a fence and swerves round to show a stone on the ground.

Metres away people are gathered around the girl, holding her head and stroking her leg.

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Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)
Page last reviewed: January 08, 2016 Page last updated: January 08, 2016 Content source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention cdc.gov

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CDC 24/7: Saving Lives. Protecting People.™
CDC 24/7: Saving Lives. Protecting People.™

Diagnosis of Tuberculosis in Three Zoo Elephants and a Human Contact — Oregon, 2013

Please note: *An erratum has been published for this article. To view the erratum, please click here.*

Weekly

January 8, 2016 / 64(52);1398-1402

Amy Zlot, MPH1; Jennifer Vines, MD1; Laura Nystrom, MPH1; Lindsey Lane, MPH2; Heidi Behm, MPH2; Justin Denny, MD1; Mitch Finnegan, DVM3; Trevor Hostetler4; Gloria Matthews4; Tim Storms, DVM3; Emilio DeBess, DVM2

In 2013, public health officials in Multnomah County, Oregon, started an investigation of a tuberculosis (TB) outbreak among elephants and humans at a local zoo. The investigation ultimately identified three bull elephants with active TB and 118 human contacts of the elephants. Ninety-six (81%) contacts were evaluated, and seven close contacts were found to have latent TB infection. The three bulls were isolated and treated (elephants with TB typically are not euthanized) to prevent infection of other animals and humans, and persons with latent infection were offered treatment. Improved TB screening methods for elephants are needed to prevent exposure of human contacts.

In May 2013, a routine annual culture of a sample from a trunk washing on elephant A, an Asian elephant aged 20 years at a zoo in Oregon's Multnomah County, yielded *Mycobacterium tuberculosis,* indicating active, potentially infectious disease. Bidirectional transmission of *M. tuberculosis* between elephants and humans has been documented (*1*). Assuming that elephant A was not infectious at the time of his previous negative trunk wash sample culture, the infectious period was defined as the 12 months preceding the positive results of the May 2013, trunk wash sample (May 2012–May 2013) (*2*). The Multnomah County Health Department (MCHD) investigated close and casual contacts of elephant A. Close contacts were defined as persons with any presence in the 8,300–square-foot elephant barn or who had been within 15 feet (4.6 m) of any of the eight elephants in the enclosed outdoor area at least weekly during the past 12 months. Casual contacts included zoo employees or volunteers who might have been exposed to elephant trunk secretions or fecal matter (*3*), but who had not had close contact with elephant A. Human contacts were evaluated with either a tuberculin skin test (TST) or interferon gamma release assay (IGRA). For close contacts, TST conversions were defined as indurations of ≥5 mm (rather than ≥10 mm used in TB screening) (*4*) within 2 years of the most recent negative TB screening test, and were considered indicative of infection with *M. tuberculosis*. Historical annual TB screening test results for close contacts were obtained from the zoo's occupational health providers. Historical test results were unavailable for other contacts. TB test results reported for contacts were documented at the initial evaluation and at ≥8 weeks after the last known exposure. Contacts whose first test occurred at least 8 weeks following the last exposure had only one TST or IGRA.

The zoo identified 19 close contacts, all of whom had TSTs at ≥8 weeks after exposure; 13 were negative. Six persons with no previous positive TST and at least one negative TST during the past 2 years had positive TSTs (Figure 1). None of the contacts with positive TSTs had spent time in TB-endemic countries, or had other risk factors for TB, such as a history of homelessness or injection-drug use or diagnosis of human immunodeficiency virus. All had chest radiographs and were evaluated for symptoms; none had active disease. Among close contacts, the number and percentage of conversions from negative TST to positive within 2 years (31.6%) was higher than expected, given the baseline of 4% of the U.S. population having latent infection on the basis of a single ≥10 mm skin test result (*5*).

Because of the positive test results among close contacts, MCHD expanded the investigation to identify 39 casual contacts. A third group of 20 contacts was identified among persons who had attended special events at which elephant A sprayed paint with his trunk onto canvases behind attendees, potentially exposing them to aerosolized *M. tuberculosis*. Among all 59 casual and special event contacts, exposure to elephant A was approximately <30 minutes and at a distance of ≥25 feet. Among the 59 casual and special event contacts identified, 48 (81%) were fully evaluated; none had a positive TST or IGRA (Figure 1).

Before diagnosis of TB in elephant A, elephants were routinely screened for TB by annual cultures of samples collected from trunk washings, with samples collected from each elephant on 3 consecutive days. Following diagnosis of TB in elephant A, the zoo increased the frequency of trunk washings to once a month for infected elephants and once every 3 months for uninfected elephants. Serologic screenings were conducted once or twice a year to identify infected, but culture-negative, elephants. During the course of the investigation, antibodies to *M. tuberculosis* were detected in the serum of elephant A's father (elephant B), aged 51 years. Subsequently, in October 2013, culture of a trunk wash sample from elephant B was positive. The other seven elephants in the herd, including elephant A, had negative trunk washings at that time. Elephant B's close human contacts were identical to those of elephant A, with the exception of one new employee, whose TB screen was negative when he began employment.

In October 2013, another local public health department discovered that patient A, who had completed treatment for culture-confirmed pleural TB in the fall of 2012, had also been a casual contact of elephant A. Upon receiving notification for routine annual TB screening from the zoo, patient A had sought guidance from the health department regarding documentation of TB status. Patient

A had worked at the zoo intermittently during 2012, but had limited contact with elephants (1 hour cumulative presence in the elephant barn). Given the pleural (sputum-culture-negative) nature of patient A's disease, patient A was most likely noninfectious.

The Oregon Health Authority had reviewed patient A's *M. tuberculosis* isolate's genotype in 2012, and found no matches in Oregon. When patient A's zoo work history was revealed in October 2013, well into the contact investigation for elephant A, the Oregon Health Authority reviewed the genotypes of the isolates of patient A and elephant A, and found that they differed by only one locus in the 24-locus mycobacterial interspersed repetitive units (MIRU) pattern (Figure 2). Isolates from patient A and elephant A were analyzed at CDC using whole genome sequencing. Comparison of the assembled genomes from the two isolates identified no differences. Although this result is consistent with transmission, it does not indicate direction of transmission, and does not provide information about how patient A or the elephant contracted TB. Elephant B's isolate was genotyped, and spacer oligonucleotide typing (spoligotype) from this isolate matched those of patient A and elephant A (Figure 2).

In May 2014, a third bull elephant, elephant C, aged 44 years, was found to be infected with *M. tuberculosis* by a positive culture from a trunk washing sample. Elephant C's isolate was not whole genome sequenced; all of this elephant's human contacts were the same as those of elephant B. None of the three elephants had shown signs of illness, although elephant B had experienced temporary weight loss. All three elephants' isolates were susceptible to first-line *M. tuberculosis* drugs. Each bull has received different and changing regimens; treatment is ongoing and guided by drug levels and tolerance.

Because the strain isolated from patient A matched that from elephant A, MCHD personnel searched for an unidentified, common human source and explored the possibility that the elephants might have been previously transmitting TB despite negative trunk washings. During the summer of 2014, the investigation was expanded to include two additional groups: 1) all current and former employees who had worked at the zoo since January 1, 2010, and who met the definition of close contacts, and 2) persons who participated in the same February 2012 zoo orientation as patient A, which was the time when patient A had the most contact with elephants (Figure 1, Figure 3). Among the 28 persons who participated in the 2012 zoo orientation (including patient A), 18 had a negative TST; nine persons no longer worked at the zoo and could not be reached. MCHD concluded that persons who participated in the same orientation as patient A were likely not infected with TB in the course of their orientation. MCHD uncovered no evidence of a previously unidentified human case in the zoo orientation cohort that could have infected other humans or elephant A during this time. As of April 2015, reports from CDC's TB Genotyping Information Management System revealed that the isolates from elephant A and from patient A have unique genotypes (spoligotype + 24-locus MIRU), not matched locally or nationally.

Final results of the investigation of all 31 close contacts since 2010 identified one additional positive TST result from July 2011 (induration = 19 mm); this is close to the zoo's baseline of 0–1 conversions per year (Figure 1). On the basis of these findings, shedding of *M. tuberculosis* by elephants before elephant A's diagnosis was deemed unlikely.

Throughout the investigation, MCHD worked with the zoo and the Oregon Health Authority to ensure the safety of staff members, animals, and the public. Close and prolonged contact, including spending multiple hours indoors with infected elephants, was associated with TB transmission in this investigation. Continuing routine protocols for annual TB screening of humans who work with elephants is warranted, as is a heightened screening recommendation for the closest contacts until summer 2016. In addition to other administrative and environmental controls, all current close contacts wear a fit-tested N-95 respirator or higher level of protection when in the elephant barn or in contact with any potentially infectious elephant. Close contacts will continue to receive a TST every 6 months until summer 2016, at which point the exposure control plan will be reevaluated. Close contacts with previous positive test results will have a periodic TB symptom screen rather than a TST.

Once all elephants complete treatment for active TB, the Oregon Health Authority, MCHD, and the zoo veterinarians will decide whether to modify the exposure control plan. The elephants will continue to be screened at regular intervals according to Department of Agriculture guidelines (*2*). Because of the absence of guidance on determining when an elephant is no longer infectious, the zoo and state and local public health professionals defined an infectious elephant as one that 1) has had *M. tuberculosis* isolated from a culture of a trunk washing sample, 2) has not received at least 2 months of adequate TB treatment, and 3) has not had at least three consecutive negative findings from cultures of monthly trunk washing samples; or that is not responding to treatment, has a worsening serologic picture,* or might otherwise pose a risk to the herd, zoo personnel, or the public. On the basis of the contact investigation results, MCHD has advised that outdoor contact with infectious elephants for <30 minutes and at a distance of ≥25 feet posed minimal risk for TB transmission.

MCHD also worked with zoo veterinarians and the state public health veterinarian to develop guidelines for safe public elephant viewing. Although the contact investigation suggested minimal risk, all infectious elephants were removed from general display and public viewing within 100 feet. Routine indoor and outdoor public viewing of noninfectious elephants is considered safe.

Discussion

In North America, approximately 5% of captive Asian elephants are infected with *M. tuberculosis*, on the basis of positive cultures of trunk washing samples or necropsy results (*6*). The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has developed guidelines for the screening and diagnosis of TB in captive elephants, including annual trunk wash samples for mycobacterial culture (*2*). However, trunk-wash sample cultures, the standard for diagnosing active TB in elephants, are insensitive, and some cases of TB might be missed. Serologic screening is used in some settings to identify elephants with TB infection (*7*), but is controversial among elephant veterinarians and is subject to false-positive results (*7*).

Although MCHD's investigation did not suggest previously unrecognized shedding of *M. tuberculosis* by the elephants, annual personnel screening is an important component of occupational safety, given the potential risk for TB exposure to staff members as well as the risk to elephants of transmission from humans with undiagnosed TB. Organizations that conduct TB testing for employees should have a mechanism for tracking results and investigating when TST conversions are elevated above the annual baseline. In addition, better understanding of modes of TB transmission between humans, elephants, and other animals might lead to more comprehensive guidelines for prevention of TB transmission in high-risk settings (*8*). Genotyping surveillance, in conjunction with epidemiologic investigation, might also be effective in linking human and non-human TB cases and evaluating unrecognized transmission, especially if the strains are rare. Collaboration between public health, veterinary medicine, and occupational health experts would allow for better understanding of the risks for and prevention of zoonotic transmission of *M. tuberculosis*.

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Lauren Cowan, Division of Tuberculosis Elimination, Mycobacteriology Laboratory Branch CDC; Brian Baker, Division of Tuberculosis Elimination, National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention, CDC; Bob Lee, Oregon Zoo.

1Multnomah County Health Department, Oregon; 2Public Health Division, Oregon Health Authority; 3Oregon Zoo; 4Washington County Department of Health and Human Services, Oregon.

Corresponding author: Amy Zlot, amy.zlot@multco.us, 503-988-3406.

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* Serologic tests can be used as indicators of active infection in elephants or to assess an elephant's response to infection and treatment.

Summary

What is already known on this topic?

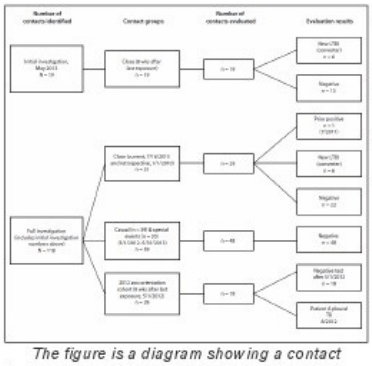
In North America, approximately 5% of captive Asian elephants are infected with *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. Bidirectional spread of *M. tuberculosis* between elephants and humans has been documented.

What is added by this report?

Investigation of a tuberculosis (TB) outbreak among three elephants at an Oregon zoo identified multiple close, casual, and spectator contacts. One hundred and eighteen contacts were identified, 96 of these contacts were screened, and seven close contacts (six recent conversions and one earlier positive test) were found to have latent, noninfectious TB. Whole-genome sequencing revealed that one elephant's *M. tuberculosis* isolate identically matched the isolate of a person with pleural TB who attended a zoo orientation in 2012. The lack of guidance about how to manage captive, TB-infected elephants complicated the decision-making process for protection of zoo contacts, other animals at the zoo, and the general public.

What are the implications for public health practice?

Collaboration between public health, veterinary medicine, and occupational health experts could lead to better understanding about associated risks, and could help prevent zoonotic transmission of *M. tuberculosis*. The development of improved TB screening methods for elephants is needed to prevent exposure to humans with close and prolonged contact.

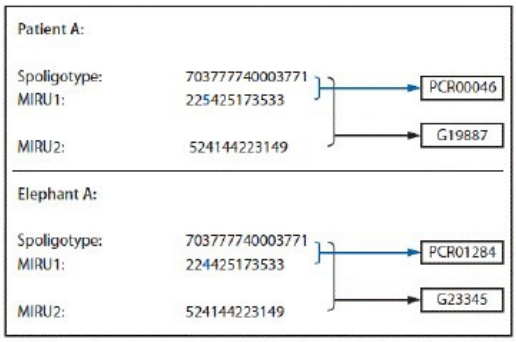


The figure is a diagram showing a contact investigation of elephants with tuberculosis at an Oregon zoo in 2013.

Abbreviations: LTBI = latent tuberculosis infection; TB = tuberculosis.

Alternate Text: The figure above is a diagram showing a contact investigation of elephants with tuberculosis at an Oregon zoo in 2013.

FIGURE 2. Genotyping analysis of *M. tuberculosis* isolates from patient A and elephant A* — Oregon, 2013

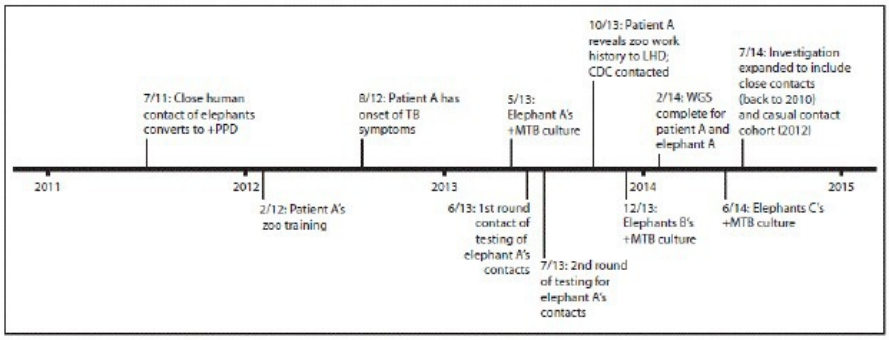


The figure is a genotyping analysis of Mycobacterium tuberculosis isolates from patient A and elephant A from an Oregon zoo tuberculosis outbreak in 2013.

* Patient A and elephant A have slightly different genotypes (spoligotype+MIRU1+MIRU2), differing by only one locus.

Alternate Text: The figure above is a genotyping analysis of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* isolates from patient A and elephant A from an Oregon zoo tuberculosis outbreak in 2013.

Abbreviations: LHD = local health department; +Mtb = positive for *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*; +PPD = positive purified protein derivative test (tuberculin skin test); TB = tuberculosis; WGS = whole genome sequencing.



The figure is a timeline of tuberculosis diagnoses in three elephants and a casual contact at an Oregon zoo in 2013.

* Current contacts (as of May 2013) of Elephant A during March 1, 2012–May 13, 2013 were initially investigated; in July 2014, the investigation was expanded to include close contacts back to January 1, 2012 and a casual (zoo orientation) cohort in February 2012.

Alternate Text: The figure above is a timeline of tuberculosis diagnoses in three elephants and a casual contact at an Oregon zoo in 2013.

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Erratum : Vol. 64, No. 52

Page last reviewed: February 11, 2016 Page last updated: February 11, 2016 Content source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (*MMWR*)

In the report, "Diagnosis of Tuberculosis in Three Zoo Elephants and a Human Contact — Oregon, 2013(https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6452a2.htm)," on page 1398, the first sentence of the second paragraph should have read as follows: "In May 2013, a routine annual culture of a sample from a trunk washing on elephant A, an Asian elephant aged **30** years at a zoo in Oregon's Multnomah County, yielded *Mycobacterium tuberculosis,* indicating active, potentially infectious disease."

Suggested citation for this article: *Erratum*: Vol. 64, No. 52. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2016;65place_Holder_For_Early_Release:131. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6505a7.

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Eleven jailed in stamp scam, one of Spain's 'biggest frauds'

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Eleven jailed in stamp scam, one of Spain's 'biggest frauds'

AFP · 27 Jul 2016, 14:46

Published: 27 Jul 2016 14:46 GMT+02:00

Spain's top criminal court said Wednesday it had sentenced 11 former executives of stamp firm Afinsa to up to 12 years in jail for their role in a vast scam that ruined thousands of savers.

The Madrid-based Audiencia Nacional also ordered six of the accused to pay €2.57 billion ($2.8 billion) in compensation for the losses incurred by investors - including former Afinsa president Juan Antonio Cano, who was sentenced to 12 years and ten months in prison.

The court said the scam, which saw Afinsa sell low quality and sometimes fake stamps for highly inflated prices to more than 190,000 people in Spain and Portugal from 1998 to 2006, was "one of the biggest frauds our courts ever experienced."

The company promised to buy back people's stamps after these supposedly rose in value, which would see their clients recoup their initial investment plus interest, the court said.

But given that the reportedly rare stamps were actually of little value in the collectors market, initial investors were only paid thanks to the cashflow received by other newer customers, in a classic Ponzi scheme.

By 2006 when authorities started investigating the scam, Afinsa had accumulated €2.57 billion in liabilities.

According to the court, the investors were largely middle-class people, "who in many cases lost the savings they were keeping for retirement or for crisis situations."

In one case reported by the El Pais daily in May 2006, nearly half of the 2,300 inhabitants of the village of Dosbarrios, a farming community in the heart of the country, lost their savings.

Apart from Cano, who was found guilty of aggravated fraud and criminal insolvency, the other former executives received prison sentences ranging from two years and three months to 11 years.

They were also ordered to pay fines totalling more than €72 million.

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Berbalang Blues: The Elusive Ghouls of Cagayan Sulu

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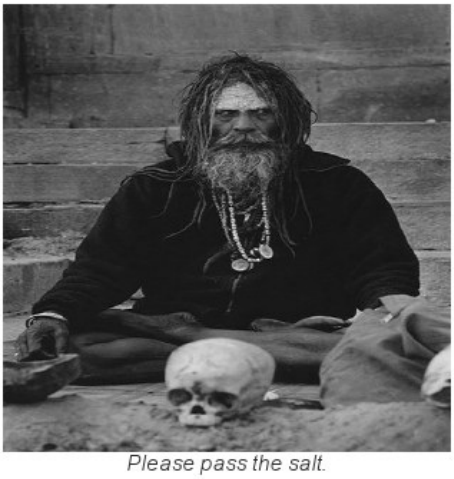
EsoterX

~ If Monsters Don't Exist, Why Are They Out To Get Me?

15 *Wednesday* Jun 2016

Posted by EsoterX in Anthropology, Folklore, History, Monsters, Mythology

"Despite my ghoulish reputation, I really have the heart of a small boy. I keep it in a jar on my desk"
– Robert Bloch



Please pass the salt.

Mapun Island, historically known as Cagayan Sulu, is a tiny 276 square kilometer island between Malaysia and the Philippines in the Sulu Sea, occupied largely by an Austronesian people called the Jama Mapun (or Sama Kagayan, as they are part of the larger Sama-Bajau ethnic group that inhabit islands stretching from the Sulu Sea to Borneo). Over time, the Sama-Bajau have spread out across Southeast Asia, earning them the nickname "Sea Gypsies", as they largely follow the sea trade in sea cucumber. And then there's the ghouls. A 19th Century report of an intra-tribal war that fractured Cagayan Sulu society contains the curious observation that island villages were roughly equally divided between two vying chieftains named Hadji Mahomet and Hadji Brahim, excepting a single village at the center of the territory, which neither side laid claim to. This little piece of undesirable real estate was said to be home to the preternatural Berbalangs, a cat-eyed tribe of corpse-eaters who sometimes resorted to astral homicide when the supply of dead bodies dwindled.

British Navy Lieutenant and amateur naturalist Ethelbert Forbes Skertchly of Hong Kong, Fellow of the Entomological Society of London and member of the Asiatic Society visited Cagayan Sulu, and reported his findings in the 1896 Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. Hidden amongst his general descriptions of island culture, flora, and fauna are details about the mysterious Berbalangs. From Skertchly's accounts we learn such mundane facts as "The island is of volcanic origin, one extinct volcano rising to a height of 1105 feet, and a noteworthy feature is the occurrence of three lakes occupying the craters of old volcanoes. The outer wall of one of these has been broken through, so that the deep basin within communicates with the sea. The water of the two other lakes is fresh. The soil of the island is fertile, and much of the jungle has been cleared for cultivation. Although nominally under Spanish rule, the inhabitants would resent all attempts at interference. Their fighting force is estimated at from twelve to fifteen hundred men, and they have fortified one of the craters as a place of refuge. Fishing is practised with the aid of a root called tubur, which is used to stupefy the fish. The natives hold some remarkable superstitions" (Howarth, 1897, p537). The superstition referred to is that regarding the Berbalang. Skertchly endeavored to obtain details about the Berbalang, interviewing numerous witnesses to Berbalang depredations and piecing together a general description of them.

In the centre of the island is a small village the inhabitants of which owe allegiance to neither

of the two chiefs. These people are called "Berbalangs," and the Cagayans live in great fear of them. These Berbalangs are ghouls and must eat human flesh occasionally or they would die. You can always tell them because the pupils of their eyes are not round but just narrow slits like those of a cat. They dig open the graves and eat the entrails of the corpses; but in Cagayan the supply is limited, so when they feel the craving for a feed of human flesh they go away into the grass, and having carefully hidden their bodies hold their breath and fall into a trance. Their astral bodies are then liberated in the form of heads with the feet attached to the ears as wings. They fly away, and entering a house make their way into the body of one of the occupants and feed on his entrails, when of course he dies in fearful agony. The Berbalangs may be heard coming, as they make a moaning noise which is loud at a distance and dies away to a feeble wail as they approach. When they are near you the sound of their wings may be heard and the flashing lights of their eyes can be seen like dancing fire-flies in the dark. Should you be the happy possessor of a cocoa-nut pearl you are safe, but otherwise the only way to beat them off is to cut at them with a kris, the blade of which has been rubbed with the juice of a lime. If you see the lights and hear the meaning in front of you, wheel suddenly round and make a cut in the opposite direction. Berbalangs always go by contraries and are never where they appear to be. The cocoa-nut pearl, a stone like an opal sometimes found in the cocoa-nut, is the only really efficacious charm against their attacks and it is only of value to the finder, as its magic powers cease when it is given away. When the finder dies the pearl loses its lustre and becomes dead. The juice of limes sprinkled on a grave will prevent the Berbalangs from entering it, so all the dead are buried either under or near the houses and the graves are sprinkled daily with fresh lime-juice (Skertchly, 1896, p55).

Skertchly was understandably curious, but was hard pressed to find a guide to take him to visit the village of the Berbalangs. The brave eldest son of Chief Hadji Mohomet, Matali, finally volunteered to lead him within half a mile of the Berbalang home, providing him with a lime-sprinkled knife and warning him not to accept any food the Berbalang's might offer, as consumption of anything they provided would turn him into a Berbalang (presumably it's provenance would be suspect, having likely come from a decayed corpse – reminiscent of similar warnings about the consumption of human flesh turning folks into a Wendigo among Native Americans). Intrepid explorer that he was, Skertchly set off.

Taking the kris and limes and leaving Matali praying for my safety, I soon arrived at the village. It consisted of about a dozen houses of the ordinary native type; but with the exception of a few fowls and a solitary goat there was no living thing to be seen. I was surprised at this and entered several of the houses, but all were alike deserted. Everything was in perfect order, and in one house some rice was standing in basins, still quite hot, as though the occupants had been suddenly called away when about to begin their evening meal. Thinking perhaps that they had run away I halooed but received no reply, and though I made a thorough search of the vicinity could discover no one. I returned to Matali, and on telling him of the deserted state of the village, he turned pale and implored me to come back at once as the Berbalangs were out and it would be dangerous to return in the dark (Skertchly, 1896, p56).

As Skertchly and Matali hastened homeward they were dogged by faint moaning, the sound of wings, and dancing red lights. The moaning faded away as they passed an isolated homestead of a certain gentleman named Hassan, which they avoided as Matali pointed out that this was surely where the Berbalang had gone and he hurried Skertchly back to his father's village where they were

congratulated for surviving their ill-conceived adventure. Skertchly was acquainted with Hassan, and though Matali suggested Hassan was in possession of a protective coconut pearl, Skertchly elected to visit him the next day and determine his status.

Accordingly, shortly after day-break, I started off alone, as I could get no one to accompany me, and in due course came to Hassan's house. There was no sign of anyone about so I tried the door but found it fastened. I shouted several times but no one answered, so, putting my shoulder to the door I gave a good push and it fell in. I entered the house and looked round but could see no one, going further in I suddenly started back, for, huddled up on the bed, with hands clenched, face distorted, and eyes staring as in horror, lay my friend Hassan—dead (Skertchly, 1896, 57).

Say what you want about necro-cannibalism, but the Berbalang appear to have been living in relative peace while their neighbors scrupulously avoided them and went about bashing each other on the heads. Perhaps if the other local tribes adopted similar strategies, they could have avoided a lot of bloodshed, or as Abbie Hoffman said, "I believe in compulsory cannibalism. If people were forced to eat what they killed, there would be no more wars".

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Elvis Elm Has Morphed Into Trump Tree And We're All Shook Up huffingtonpost.com

Presumably, it's yelling at a nearby tree that looks like the bereaved parent of a war hero.

08/02/2016 01:48 pm ET
David Moye Reporter, The Huffington Post

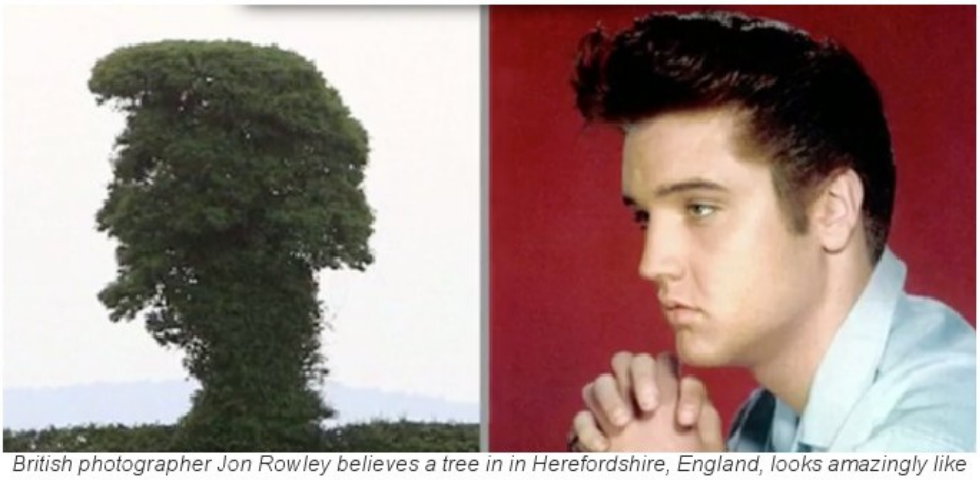


British photographer Jon Rowley believes a tree in in Herefordshire, England, looks amazingly like Donald Trump.

It's a tree-mendously sad sight: A tree that once looked like Elvis Presley has now morphed into Donald Trump.

The tree in question is an elm in Herefordshire, England, that received worldwide attention in 2013 after photographer Jon Rowley noticed its amazing resemblance to the King of Rock 'n' Roll.

"I was just driving along one day and it stuck out like a sore thumb," Rowley told South West News Service then. "I'm not much of an Elvis fan, but I just noticed that unique quiff straight away and said, 'That tree looks like Elvis.'"



British photographer Jon Rowley believes a tree in in Herefordshire, England, looks amazingly like Donald Trump. Some people think the elm tree on the left looks like Elvis Presley. Google engineer Matt Cutts recently found a pastry in San Sebastian, Spain, that he said looked like Donald Trump. Getty Images

Rowley recently drove by the "Elvis tree" and became all shook up by what he saw: It now looks like Donald Trump.

"I was driving past, for the first time in three years, from the opposite direction and saw a different side to the tree," Rowley told The Huffington Post. "The ivy had grown and the Elvis quiff seemed to have become a Trump comb-over."

Rowley was unnerved by the sight.

"It's not everyday that you see a tree that looks like Donald Trump. It was so odd," he told SWNS. "Perhaps it's a warning about who could become president in November."

Perhaps. Or it might just be an example of pareidolia, the psychological phenomenon that leads people to see human faces and other familiar patterns amid random, meaningless shapes.

It seems The Donald inspires a lot of that.

Back in June, Google engineer Matt Cutts was vacationing in San Sebastian, Spain, when he spotted a pastry that he thought looked like Trump's trademark comb-over. In a turn of events that is surely not a metaphor for anything, the snack proved to be a bit of a disappointment.

"It looked good, but once I dug into it, it wasn't as tasty as I thought," Cutts told HuffPost.



British photographer Jon Rowley believes a tree in in Herefordshire, England, looks amazingly like Donald Trump. Some people think the elm tree on the left looks like Elvis Presley. Google engineer Matt Cutts recently found a pastry in San Sebastian, Spain, that he said looked like Donald Trump. Getty Images

In March, Liam O'Hare of Edinburgh, Scotland, found a piece of ham that he said looked amazingly like the real estate mogul.

"I'm not a fan of Trump's but I am a fan of toasted sandwiches," O'Hare told SWNS. "So rather than preserving it, I ate it straight away."



British photographer Jon Rowley believes a tree in in Herefordshire, England, looks amazingly like Donald Trump. Some people think the elm tree on the left looks like Elvis Presley. Google engineer Matt Cutts recently found a pastry in San Sebastian, Spain, that he said looked like Donald Trump. Getty Images

Last August, Jan Castellano of Wildwood, Missouri, purchased a tub of Earth Balance Organic Spread and saw the image of Donald Trump looking right back at her.

"This was pretty much before I had coffee, so I was easily amused," Castellano, 63, told HuffPost at the time. "I needed to put on my glasses to make sure it was him."



British photographer Jon Rowley believes a tree in in Herefordshire, England, looks amazingly like Donald Trump. Some people think the elm tree on the left looks like Elvis Presley. Google engineer Matt Cutts recently found a pastry in San Sebastian, Spain, that he said looked like Donald Trump. Getty Images

Editor's note: Donald Trump regularly incites political violence and is a serial liar, rampant

xenophobe, racist, misogynist and birther who has repeatedly pledged to ban all Muslims — 1.6 billion members of an entire religion — from entering the U.S.

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The Emerald Tablet and Its Mystical Message | Historic Mysteries

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Historic Mysteries

Doug MacGowan August 5, 2016
Unexplained Mysteries

Does the Emerald Tablet Hint at the Secrets to Making Gold?

The Emerald Tablet (a.k.a. Tabula Smaragdina and Smaragdine Table) is a brief document that was allegedly used in ancient times as a step towards finding the Philosopher's Stone, the key to turning common metals into gold. The author of the Tablet is noted in the text as being "Hermes Trismegistus," meaning "Hermes the Thrice-Greatest," although it is unclear if such a person actually existed or whether the name has some special meaning in the context of the Tablet.



Engraved image of the "emerald tablet" 1609. Credit: Heinrich Khunrath (1560-1605).

Researchers are not entirely sure of the origin of the text of the Tablet, but the commonly accepted theory is that it originated in Arabia between 500 to 700 CE. It would later be translated into Latin, English, and other languages by scholars and alchemists. The earliest version of the Tablet still in existence is found in a compilation of ancient writings called "The Book of the Secret of Creation and the Art of Nature" from the 700s.

The most expansive document about the Tablet is a document by the otherwise unknown alchemist Ortolanus (a.k.a. Hortulanus) written sometime in the 14th century CE. Not only did he present the text of the Tablet, but he also wrote a detailed commentary on the text, which is still available for scientists and the curious.

Newton's Translation of the Text

The Tablet also captured the attention of mainstream scientists such as Isaac Newton. Newton's translation from Latin of the tablet is now housed at Cambridge University and reads:

1 Tis true without error, certain and most true.
2 That which is below is like that which is above and that which is above is like that which is below to do the miracles of one only thing
3 And as all things have been and arose from one by the mediation of one: so all things have their birth from this one thing by adaptation.
4 The Sun is its father, the moon its mother, the wind hath carried it in its belly, the earth is its nurse.
5 The father of all perfection in the whole world is here.
6 Its force or power is entire if it be converted into earth.
7 Separate thou the earth from the fire, the subtle from the gross sweetly with great industry.
8 It ascends from the earth to the heaven and again it descends to the earth and receives the force of things superior and inferior.

9 By this means you shall have the glory of the whole world
10 and all obscurity shall fly from you.
11 Its force is above all force. For it vanquishes every subtle thing and penetrates every solid thing.
12 So was the world created.
13 From this are and do come admirable adaptations whereof the means (or process) is here in this. Hence I am called Hermes Trismegist, having the three parts of the philosophy of the whole world
14 That which I have said of the operation of the Sun is accomplished and ended.



Discovery of the Emerald Tablet, Aurora Consurgens medieval manuscript, Zürich Zentralbibliothek

A Golden Secret

Later researchers have attempted to discern concrete meaning from the cryptic text and have presented theories that the Tablet contains coded words or double meanings that would lead to the ability of changing base metals into a golden treasure.

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Owner Of Mysteriously Empty Kayak Was Just Getting A Slice

gothamist.com

by Jen Chung in News on Jul 15, 2016 2:30 pm



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(Brandon Cosby)

The mystery of the empty kayak that surfaced along the East River in DUMBO this week—prompting a concerned response from the NYPD and FDNY—has been solved. Turns out the missing kayaker was eating pizza ("I wanted a piece of pizza from Brooklyn"). Meanwhile, he left his kayak there unattended with all his stuff drifting into the water, panicking passersby who called 911.

The Brooklyn Paper reports that Tyler Jordan was visiting New York from Virginia with the express purpose of kayaking around the city:

> [H]e had just docked his ride there at around 1 pm so he could sate his craving for an authentic Kings County pie at Dumbo's best pie joint, Front Street Pizza...Jordan indulged in two hard-earned pepperoni slices...
>
> He then walked over the Brooklyn Bridge to check out the 9-11 memorial, planning to make it back within an hour-and-15 minute-window before the tide rose. But as he was walking back over the Brooklyn Bridge, Jordan noticed his kayak parking spot had turned into a crime scene. He thought perhaps someone had gotten into his boat and accidentally injured themselves — only to find that he was the man they were searching for.
>
> "I saw all of the lights, all of the trucks and boats swirling around while I was going over the Brooklyn Bridge," he said. "I saw tons of people there and thought, 'Uh-oh, maybe they're actually looking for me' "

The kayak on ground (Jen Chung / Gothamist)

Not only were there four boats in the water looking for Jordan, there were also four FDNY vehicles



c70f291cfimg_7611-jpg-mobile.jpeg

and an ambulance, plus firefighters, Parks Department workers and at least a dozen police officers.

After setting everyone at ease, Jordan continued on his merry way:

But now a new mystery emerges: Why did Jordan eat at basic Front Street Pizza when he could have enjoyed the far superior pizza from Juliana's nearby? Sad!

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Neighbors say EMT workers fought, drove through yards, damaging property

wsbtv.com

• **by: Richard Elliot** Updated: Jun 16, 2016 - 8:24 PM



Neighbors say EMTs fought, drove through yards, damaging property

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http://2wsb.tv/1OsS07j

GWINNETT COUNTY —

Neighbors are bewildered and angry after an alleged fight between two EMTs left their yards ruined and property damaged.

They tell Channel 2's Richard Elliot that the two workers from a private ambulance company dropped off a patient on Wednesday in a Duluth neighborhood but then started fighting in the front yard of a home.

The fight escalated, and neighbors say one of the employees pulled a knife on the other. One jumped into the ambulance and drove away with the other hanging onto the back of the vehicle, neighbors said.

Police say Kyle Lathon was the man who drove away in the ambulance.

Elliot reports the ambulance tore through five front yards, smashing down mailboxes, damaging electrical boxes and knocking down resident Eric Nabeth's tree.

Nabeth showed Elliot a bag full of ambulance wreckage.

"So here are the pieces the ambulance left behind. This is a piece of its mirror," Nabeth said.

Resident James Perry says he saw the other employee hanging onto the back of the ambulance.

"Came outside and saw a yellow-colored ambulance going down the roadway with a gentleman hanging off the back saying, 'Help me! Call 911,'" Perry said.

Perry says the man eventually jumped off.

Police arrested Lathon and charged him with reckless conduct along with five counts of hit-

and-run.

An insurance adjuster was already in the neighborhood tallying up the damage cost.

Perry says he never thought he'd ever see anything like this in his quiet neighborhood.

Med Care EMS says they couldn't comment on the incident outside of saying this kind of behavior will not be tolerated.

> Crazy story! An entire neighborhood still cleaning up after an angry ambulance driver drove thru their front yards. pic.twitter.com/MrfC81eSTu
>
> — Richard Elliot (@RElliotWSB) June 16, 2016
>
> Here's the mugshot of that ambulance company driver arrested for driving thru several front yards. More at 4. pic.twitter.com/vrl3vNrb6R
>
> — Richard Elliot (@RElliotWSB) June 16, 2016

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Enough Rope: The Hangman's Rope in the Press - Haunted Ohio Books

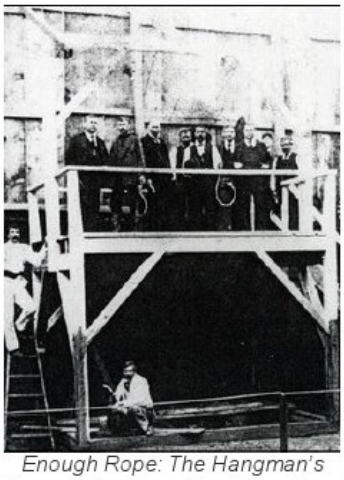
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Haunted Ohio Books Logo

This is the official website of the 7-volume Haunted Ohio series and the Ghosts of the Past series by Ohio author Chris Woodyard
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Enough Rope: The Hangman's Rope in the Press



Enough Rope: The Hangman's Rope in the Press Double gallows for Jackson and Walling, convicted of the murder of Pearl Bryan.

What is it about hangings and hanged men that so fascinates the human race ? The Hanged Man is one of the Major Arcana cards in the Tarot deck. Hangmen's ropes are believed to be a cure for sore eyes (Cornwall), fits and headaches (Pennsylvania), and ague (London). In Russia, a hangman's rope brought luck to gamblers. A rope from a suicide was specified to treat epilepsy in Pennsylvania and India.

The hand of a hanged man could be used to make a thieves' Hand of Glory or cure warts, goiter or cancer. The blood of the hanged had medicinal properties as we saw in a previous post.

As I was researching the notorious decapitation of Pearl Bryan at Fort Thomas, Kentucky and the subsequent trials and convictions of her murderers Scott Jackson and Alonzo Walling for *The Headless Horror**, I ran across the following article reporting on the ropes for the murderers' executions:

> THE ROPES MADE
>
> A PECULIAR MARK OF IDENTIFICATION UPON EACH.
>
> The ropes with which Jackson and Walling are to be hung have been completed and delivered over to Sheriff Plummer. Each rope is 23 feet in length, and they were made to order in about a week's time from the giving of the order. They were made by Frank Vonderheide., the Main Street cordage dealer, and most of the work was done by Mr. Vonderheide himself. They are made of what is known as silver finish flax sewing twine, there being four strands of 110 threads each, or 440 threads in all. A peculiarity about the two ropes is that the one intended for Jackson has one red thread in all of the four strands, while that made for Walling has one black thread in all of the four strands. This thread was run in the ropes by the order of Sheriff Plummer, who desires to keep them separate and easily identified from each other. The four red threads in the one and black threads in the other give the ropes a peculiar appearance, and serve to intensify the realization of the direct preparation for the grewsome event. It brings out the uncanny aspects of the manufacture of a strong and pliable rope that is the best and most perfect product of a ropemaker, and yet that has but one brief use to serve in the world, that is to

be accomplished in a second—the taking of a man's life.

> George W. Ward, of George W. Ward & Co., the cordage dealers, had a piece of the rope on 'Change yesterday. Mr. Ward furnished the raw material from which the threads and ropes were made, and no little interest was aroused by his exhibition of the object. *Cincinnati [OH] Enquirer* 16 March 1897: p. 12

Of course the executioner would want to know which rope was assigned to which prisoner—it was a point of professional pride to carefully calculate the weight of each prisoner and the drop so that the execution would go smoothly. Jackson and Walling were hung on a single gallows where a lever opened both traps simultaneously. However carefully the ropes were made, someone miscalculated: Instead of breaking their necks, Jackson and Walling strangled to death.

I began to find other notes on hangmen's ropes in other sensational murder cases. The materials, quality, and pedigree of the ropes seemed to be a subject of absorbing interest to the public, judging from how often they appeared in the papers and the care with which these minute details were reported. For example, sheriffs might have strong opinions about the quality of their cordage or be superstitious about either using an entirely new rope to ensure a successful hanging or using an old rope that had previously hung a notorious criminal—perhaps to humiliate the person being executed. Let us put on our black caps and examine some random yet representative notes on the specifications for hangmen's ropes and the superstitions surrounding them. And may the Lord have Mercy upon our souls….

The geographical origins of a rope's hemp seemed to be a way to further demean the prisoner.

> The Worcester Spy mentions that "a hangman's rope made two years ago of South Carolina hemp, to hang Jeff. Davis with, was forwarded from Worcester, Mass., to Washington, on Monday. It was made by Mrs. Parmenter, a daughter of Capt. Peter Slater, who, it will be remembered by our old residents, was the builder of the first rope walk out of Boston ever established in Massachusetts. The maker of the rope wishes to have it speedily used." *Janesville [WI] Daily Gazette* 6 June 1865: p. 2

> The rope for the execution of [Abolitionist John] Brown, says the *Baltimore Patriot*, was made in Kentucky by a Kentuckian, expressly for the purpose, and sent to Gov. Wise, who accepted it. *Lowell [MA] Daily Citizen and News* 5 December 1859: p. 2

> A three-inch European-made Manila rope shall always be used for executions. *The Punjab Record,* Volume 24, 1890 [Was this a matter of trade protectionism, a jibe at the doomed prisoners, or an Imperialist insult to the rope-makers of India?]

Some law officials preferred a new rope so as to ensure a smooth hanging, while others treasured historic ropes.

> A Hangman's Rope

> The rope which was used to-day in the execution of John Henry Young is just an ordinary hemp rope, but a wonderful story of tragic interest would be revealed, could it but speak. Nineteen times has one end been knotted around the gallows beam, and nineteen times has the noose been placed around the neck of a condemned criminal.

> This rope is the property of W.A. Stewart of Cleburne, ex-sheriff of Johnson county. Mr.

> Stewart had the rope made in St. Louis in 1898, to be used in the execution of John B. Shaw, a white man. The rope was made by a German and was hand-twisted, the very best quality of hemp obtainable being utilized in its manufacture. The rope is eighteen feet long and cost Mr. Stewart $12.50. The noose made to go around the neck of Shaw has never been changed. – *Houston Post. American Citizen [Kansas City, KS]* 26 May 1905: p. 3

> The rope for the execution was borrowed from Sheriff Julian, of Howan County, and has been used on several previous occasions for the purpose it performed today. [from an article entitled "Hammons and Moore Hang, Two Executions in One Day. J.W. Hammons Hanged at Winston-Salem for Murder of His Wife–/Ashton Moore, Sampson County Negro Rapist, is Hanged at Clinton"] *Charlotte [NC] Observer* 3 September 1905: p. 1

Double hangings were rare enough to elicit comment in the papers, like an article headed "Drew a Pair. That's What the Hangman's Rope Did in Pennsylvania," which describes two men hung successively with the same rope. It was coupled with another article about a hanging of a double murderer where the rope broke on the first try, was mended, then successfully hanged the prisoner. *Albuquerque [MN]Morning Democrat* 21 February 1890: p. 1

Sheriffs could be a finicky lot about their hangman's ropes.

> **ROPE COMING**
>
> **Sheriff Bogue places an Order for Rope for the Execution Here September 14.**
>
> Sheriff Bogue placed on order while in Chicago for the rope to be used in the execution of Ira O. Jenkins September 14. The quality of rope he wanted was not to be obtained in Chicago, but it was sent for and is expected to reach here in a day or two. It is the same kind that was used in the execution of J.W. Cole, and the best rope for the purpose that is manufactured. The sheriff still has on hand two pieces of the rope with which Cole was executed, one of them not having been used, but he wants a new rope for this execution, so that there may be no possibility for an unsuccessful execution. *Bismarck [ND] Tribune* 4 September 1900: p. 3

> **Phelps and Bailey executions**
>
> Sheriff Martin will select the rope for the execution within the next few days and have it well stretched before used. He has several samples of rope of different sizes in his office. *Evening Post* [Charleston, SC] 7 July 1899: p. 4

> **Drawing Near, William Eubanks Preparing to Meet His Death**
>
> The rope for the execution has been purchased by Sheriff McDougall, and it is now in process of preparation for use. It is unusually large five-eighths inch, because of the great weight of Eubanks, about 200 pounds. *Evening News [San Jose, CA]* 16 January 1891: p. 3

There seems to have been a certain hierarchy in rope-makers as evidenced by the comment in the article on the Cole hanging: "the best rope for the purpose that is manufactured." And if you found yourself all thumbs when trying to knot the rope, you could even order a pre-tied noose for an extra fee.

Manufacture Hangman's Ropes.

There is in St. Louis a firm of rope makers and dealers, doing business on North Main street, that has a side line that it does not advertise. It is the manufacture of hangman's ropes. The firm sells as many as 100 of these ropes annually.

The price of the rope, with the nooses ready for use, is $5. The ropes are hand made and of hemp, and one of the employees of the firm's North St. Louis rope walk ties the knot. A few weeks since the sheriff of Madison county, Il., had a man to hang at Edwardsville. He bought a rope that he thought would answer the purpose.

The tying of the knot he found, however, to be a more difficult matter than he imagined, and he went to St. Louis to have the noose made. The ropemaker charged him $2.50 for tying the knot. Rural Collaborator.*Plain Dealer* [Cleveland, OH] 17 April 1892: p. 13

HE MADE HANGMEN'S ROPES

For More Than Fifty Years, Godfrey Boger Supplied Nooses.

Philadelphia Telegraph.

Godfrey Boger, 2251 North Fairhill Street, who for over fifty years had been the maker of the hangmen's ropes, was buried recently in American Mechanics' cemetery. He died at his home, aged 75 years, disproving a superstition among cordage workers that a "necktie maker" enjoys a short life. [I haven't found this bit of folklore anywhere else.]

Boger, who was employed at the Edwin H. Fitler company's works, at Tacony, made all the ropes used in executions in this state and in various parts of the country. Boger never witnessed an execution, although he often had been invited to attend. Of all the gibbet ropes that Boger turned out but one broke and in that case the parting of the strands was caused by friction against a sharp-edged pulley above the scaffold.

No charge is ever made by the Fitler firm for the hangmen's ropes, only the expressage being charged to the county ordering them. A member of the firm said today that there is no particular reason other than custom for not charging for the ropes. The hemp used is imported from Italy and great care is taken in twisting the strands.

Boger had been engaged in this grewsome occupation since he was 19 years old. He took great pride in his work. *Beaumont [TX] Enterprise* 18 July 1911: p. 6

Then we have the gibbet rope as talisman. Naturally something so valuable encouraged counterfeit cordage.

Hangman's Rope as a Talisman.

The popular pocket piece just now in this city is a piece of hangman's rope. If all the hangman's rope were taken from the pockets of superstitious St. Louisians, they would form a rope of considerable length. The five hangings recently taking place in this city have brought out again the superstitious that hangman's rope is a sure cure for rheumatism, consumption, heart disease, apoplexy, and everything else. The rope is a sure cure for all the ills that flesh is heir to, if properly applied and adjusted; but that is

not the way that great many St. Louis men and women look at it.

In the police stations nearly every prisoner who is searched carries a bit of rope and a great number of private citizens treasure up the ghastly hempen mementoes. Every tramp carries one, and in the alleys frequented by the colored populace there are yards of rope with which Ellis and Ward were executed. The supply is not yet exhausted and half an inch of the execution rope sells for the phenomenally low sum of five cents. A gentleman with whom a reported had a conversation stated that a very nice lady had asked him for a piece of the rope. She was handsomely dressed, and pretty, too. With recklessness he promised to procure her a piece, not thinking she was in earnest. He met her again. She asked for a piece of rope. He straight-way proceeded around among his friends, but could not get any genuine. He had to have a piece for that lady, however, and the brilliant idea struck him that he could give her any piece of twisted hemp .She would never know the difference. He gave her a piece of the frayed and broken clothes-line, saying that it was a strand of the rope and she put it in her purse and went away happy. Several parties have been selling the rope about town and taking in the gullible people. St Louis Republican. *Ackley [IA] Enterprise* 4 March 1882: p. 2

Or the rope could be a hoodoo. Lynching ropes were particularly potent charms.

A Veritable Hoodoo

Strange and Eventful History of a Piece of Hangman's Rope.

A couple of evenings ago a young man named Tollman, who lives near Ellenwood, dropped in at the police station and gave a reporter there about an inch of the white plow line with which the negro who poisoned the Burks family was lynched. Mr. Tollman was present at the inquest the preceding day and had there secured the relic.

The plow line was in three strands, and some hours later the reporter separated one of them and gave it to Call Officer Beavers. A negro who happened to be in the station at the time begged a strand for himself. He said a piece of plow line with which a man has been hanged makes a formidable hoodoo, and if the plow line is white the efficacy of the hoodoo is doubled. The reporter accordingly gave him one of the two remaining strands and wrapping the other in tissue paper put it in his pocket.

Now for chapter 2. As Officer Beavers was going home yesterday he thought to attach the string to his watch guard for safe keeping, and in so doing dropped the watch and broke it so badly that is its doubtful if it will ever run again. He put the bit of plow line in his pocket and inside of two hours barked his shin on a chair, got a cinder in his eye, spilled a bottle of ink on his pants, and had a counterfeit dollar passed on him. He then threw the hoodoo on the back of a negro who was splitting wood in the yard, and before the man struck a dozen more blows he cut his little toe off.

The reporter's first misadventure was to break a pair of eyeglasses he prized highly and a little while later he tore up a lot of "copy" by mistake and had to write it all over again. This was Monday night. Yesterday he took the hoodoo string to the dining room of his hotel and quietly stuck it in the folds of the apron of the waiter who attended him. A few minutes later the darky fell down the kitchen stairs making an unearthly clatter. And dropping the fatal talisman. He picked it up and instantly suspecting witchcraft put it

down the back of another waiter.

This victim, all unsuspicious, loaded a tray with meals for six and went up to the dining room. At the head of the stairs he caught his foot and fell sprawling, breaking every dish on the tray and scattering beefsteaks, potatoes and miscellaneous eatables all over the apartment. Somebody informed him of the hoodoo, and he put it in the stove.

The possessor of the third strand has not yet been heard from, but if he gets run over, falls out of a window, breaks a leg or meets with some kindred adventure, it will occasion no surprise. Atlanta Constitution. *Daily Journal and Journal and Tribune* [Knoxville, TN] 21 November 1893: p. 7

The notion of a used rope crops up in this ghost story about a suicide's rope from Toledo, Ohio. You'll find the entire true tale in *The Face in the Window: Haunting Ohio Tales*. It's the sort of thing you couldn't sell as fiction—it would be too implausible.

A GHOST ON THE BRIDGE

THE DEPARTED SPIRIT THAT PATROLS A TOLEDO BRIDGE AT MIDNIGHT

Toledo, Ohio, December 27. One of the Cherry Street bridge-tenders said to me the other day:

"The Enquirer has caused an 'l of a row around this bridge. Since it published an account of Meyers' ghost haunting it, thousands of people have haunted me with questions about it. I do not know whether it is Meyers' ghost or his son's, but there is some mighty strange goings on around the west end of this bridge. I have seen it myself, but, Lord knows, I don't know what it is. I never went near enough to find out."

I hunted up Detective Louie Trotter, who gave me a more detailed account of the affair than I had been able to get elsewhere. He said: "I have heard the new bridge was haunted, and I know the old one was. It was like this: Some of the boys who live on the East Side were going home from duty one August morning in 1882. When we reached the first pier I was horrified to see the body of someone hanging there. It did not take us long to cut the corpse down and we found it was Pop Meyers, as he was familiarly called. His face was just as pleasant as if he were selling a pair of shoes to a customer. There was not the least sign of pain, and his wide-open eyes were looking rather expectantly up the river. He had evidently put on a new shirt, collar, and necktie, and was well dressed, except that he had no coat or shoes on. Well, we carried him home and found some letters which plainly indicated that his mind had left his body. His son, who had brought so much care on the old man's mind by his dissipation, begged us to give him the rope with which his father had hanged himself. 'I want it as a reminder,' he said, 'of my father.' Well, some way he obtained the rope, and with it, shortly afterward, ended his life at the identical spot, with the same rope. It was not long after this that the report got around that Meyers was walking the bridge at night, carrying a rope and looking longingly up the river. I investigated the affair and found it was true something was haunting the bridge. The ghost was dressed just as Meyers was on the morning that I cut him down. The old bridge was carried away, and the story was forgotten. The first night the new bridge was opened late wayfarers were badly frightened by a phantom walking slowly along in his bare feet, making no noise as he softly trod the planks. That's all I

know about it. Officer Kruse states that many people have recently told me they had seen Meyers' ghost patrolling the bridge, rope in hand, after midnight." *Cincinnati [OH] Enquirer* 28 December 1884: p. 13

If you are interested in other stories about 19th-century capital punishment, see the "Crime" section for posts such as "Capital Improvements, Four New Methods of Execution" and "Choking with Mirth: Gallows Humor."

*The last chapter in *The Headless Horror: Strange and Ghostly Ohio Tales* covers the paranormal history of Pearl Bryan and her murderers. For an admirable account of this case see http://www.planetslade.com/pearl-bryan.html.

Chris Woodyard is the author of *The Victorian Book of the Dead, The Ghost Wore Black, The Headless Horror, The Face in the Window*, and the 7-volume *Haunted Ohio* series. She is also the chronicler of the adventures of that amiable murderess Mrs Daffodil in *A Spot of Bother: Four Macabre Tales*. The books are available in paperback and for Kindle. Indexes and fact sheets for all of these books may be found by searching hauntedohiobooks.com. Join her on FB at Haunted Ohio by Chris Woodyard or The Victorian Book of the Dead.

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Sacre Bleu! Euro 2016 mascot shares name with sex toy

standard.co.uk



Super Victor: The Euro 2016 mascot, not the sex toy LOIC VENANCE/AFP/Getty Images

Super Victor may be the face of Euro 2016 but parents have been in for an unfortunate shock if they've been searching online to find a toy of the tournament's mascot.

Type 'Super Victor toy' into Google and you could be in for an unfortunate shock, with a host of websites selling a sex toy, not a plush version of the mascot.

In a statement European football's governing body said: "All we can say is that [the sex aids] are not produced by Uefa."

The name of the toy had been chosen in a online poll with over 100,000 votes, Super Victor taking 48 per cent of the ballot to beat Goalix and Driblou.

> Salut à tous,#EURO2016, J-2
>
> Aux sources d'une mascotte...https://t.co/gdCJ6DdNhg
>
> — UEFA EURO 2016 (@EURO2016) June 8, 2016

Super Victor is described as a small boy whose cape contains superpowers that enable him to "fly up high into the sky and travel all around the globe at super-fast speeds".

The mascot also has his own Twitter account (@supervictor) but is yet to address the controversy around his name.

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Evangelist buys Tyler Perry's mansion for $17.5million

dailymail.co.uk

Daily Mail .com
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- **David Turner, an evangelist and former businessman, has been revealed as the buyer of Tyler Perry's Atlanta, Georgia mega-mansion**
- **The 34,668-square-foot estate - which was inspired by Versailles - sold two months ago for $17.5million - $7.5million less than the asking price**
- **The home has infinity swimming pool, a lighted tennis court, a fully equipped gym, a spa, a theater and much more**
- **It is the most expensive home to ever go on the market in Atlanta**

By Ashley Collman For Dailymail.com

An evangelist and former businessman has been identified as the buyer of Tyler Perry's over-the-top mini Versailles mansion.

Buckhead.com, a local website covering the upscale Atlanta, Georgia suburb, broke the news that David Turner was the buyer in the under-wraps deal.

The website received a tip about the buyer and confirmed the news with Turner himself, who says God himself played a role in the deal.

'God literally told me to come here,' Turner said. 'I went online and I saw this house, and that's when I felt like God told me, "This is your house."'





Evangelist and former businessman David Turner (left) has been revealed as the new owner of Tyler Perry's (right) Versailles-inspired Georgia mansion

Turner says he and Tyler Perry hashed out the deal face to face, settling on $17.5million - a whopping $7.5million less than the original asking price.

Despite the discount, the sale remains the most expensive in state history.

Turner says he has already moved into the palatial $34,668-square-foot home with his wife and two kids. They plan to use the home as their main residence.

Both Turner and Perry come from poor backgrounds, and defied the odds to become extremely successful.

Perry found his success in Hollywood, first acting then directing and producing his own movies which have been box office hits.

Hollywood mogul Perry sold his Atlanta version of Versailles for $17.5million (pictured) - taking $7.5million off the asking pice

The Chateau de Versailles is pictured during the Bastille day traditional military parade on the Champs-Elysees avenue

It was put on the market for a cool $25 million last June and is the most expensive home to go on the market in Atlanta. Pictured: The grand staircase complete with ostentatious chandelier

Turner on the other hand, graduated early and got a degree in business management which helped him launch a business career by age 19.



He made his millions in producing nuts and dried fruit, eventually selling his two multi-million dollar companies SunTree Snack Foods and Southwest Commodities to focus on his Christian ministry, David Turner International Ministries.

The home has a resort-style infinity swimming pool, a lighted tennis court, a fully equipped gym, a spa, a theater, a hobby house, gardens, a caretakers suite and an underground ballroom.

- Now that's a magical mansion! Inside David Copperfield's... Outrage among locals in Rome after three women tourists... Curl hair with a pencil, use banana peel to fight spots and...
- Disney introduces its first Latina princess after 92 years... 'My only crime was looking dangerously glamorous':...



It also includes its own generator, guard house, presidential-level security, access to the Chattahoochee River and two gated residential entrances.

The 34,688 sq. foot mansion is set on a 17 acre estate and is the most expensive home to go on the market in the state, according to Atlanta Fine Homes, who made the sale.



According to Sotheby's, the previous highest sale in Atlanta's history was a Buckhead estate that sold for $10.5 million in 2009.

Perry - who used to be homeless - still owns several other properties throughout the country, and is known to entertain guests such as Barack Obama and Oprah.



According to Sotheby's the previous highest sale in Atlanta's history was a Buckhead estate that sold for $10.5million in 2009



The dramatic windows let in the light on the sumptuous interior of this classic drawing room which has very high ceilings

- Now that's a magical mansion! Inside David Copperfield's... Outrage among locals in Rome after three women tourists... Curl hair with a pencil, use banana peel to fight spots and...
- Disney introduces its first Latina princess after 92 years... 'My only crime was looking dangerously glamorous':...

Not all of the property is gold gilt and marble, this modest living room shows that Perry also favors comfort



Rags to riches: Perry was once homeless and sleeping in his car on the streets of Atlanta. Above the grounds of the property are pictured

The spectacular property has seven bedrooms, nine bathrooms and five half bathrooms

Perry has bought and sold real estate in Atlanta, New York and California. Above one of the hallways in the mansion

The property also has its own generator, guard house, presidential-level security and two gated residential entrances



The home has a resort-style infinity swimming pool (pictured) a lighted tennis court, a fully equipped gym, a spa, a theater, a hobby house, gardens, a caretakers suite and an underground ballroom

Sea of green: The 34,688 sq. foot mansion is set on a 17 acre estate, it also has access to the Chattahoochee River (pictured)

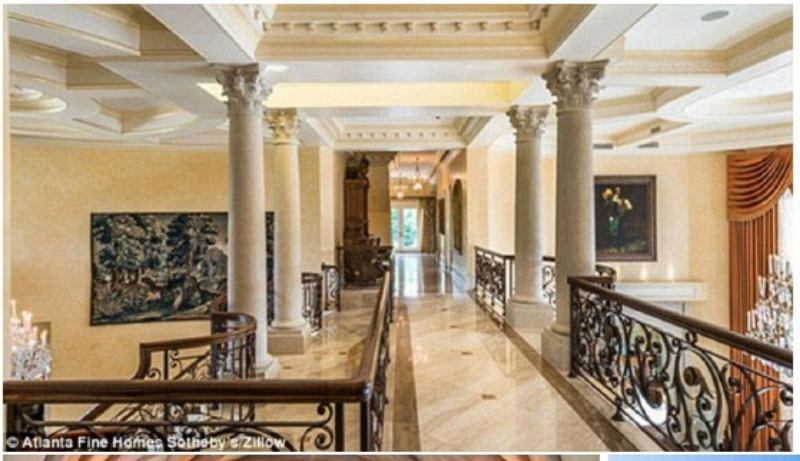
Tyler Perry is the only filmmaker in history to have five films open #1 at the box office in the last five years

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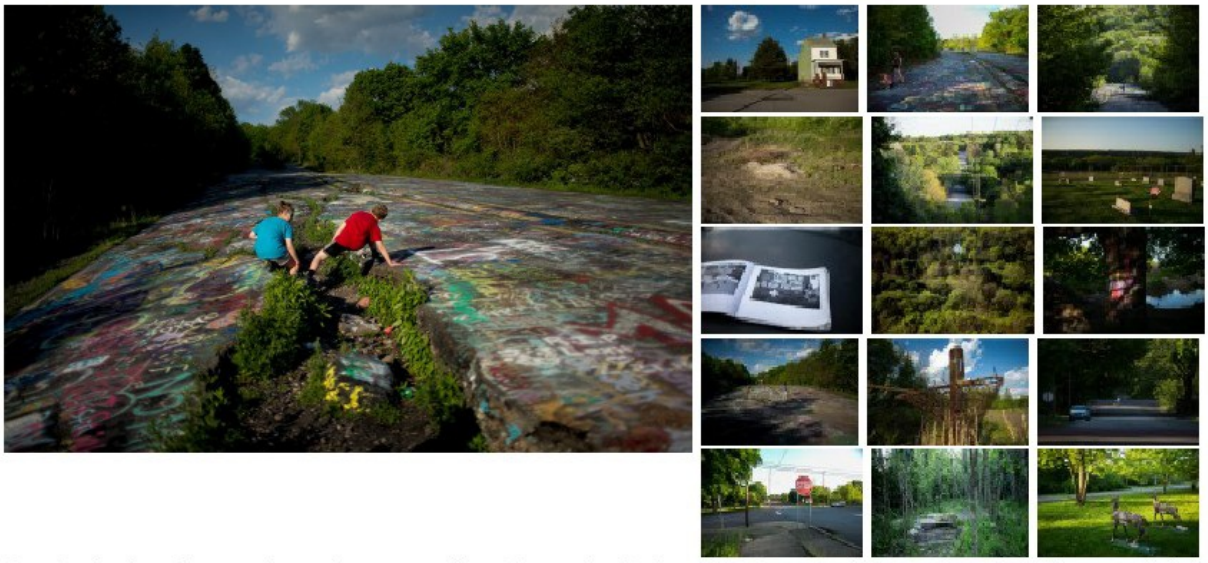
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Ex-Centralia residents to celebrate birth of dying town

By John Beauge | Special to PennLive on June 29, 2016 at 7:15 AM

pennlive.com

http://www.pennlive.com/news/2016/06/former_residents_returning_to.html



Centralia is a borough and a near-ghost town in Columbia County, Pennsylvania. It's population has dwindled from over 1,000 residents in 1981 to 8 in 2013 as a result of the coal mine fire that has been burning beneath the borough since 1962. People explore "Grafitti Highway". A piece of Route 61 just south of the town was closed in the early 1990s. The mine fire posed a real threat to the structural integrity of it. Subsidence was leading to uneven surfaces and steam poured out through cracks in the asphalt. Today the abandoned section of Rt. 61 is a favorite location for tourists. Sean Simmers, PennLive.com May 24, 2016
Sean Simmers | ssimmers@pennlive.com

CENTRALIA — With the exception of a few houses and paved streets, the borough of Centralia no longer exists.

But on Friday and Saturday, more than 150 people expect to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Columbia County municipality becoming a borough.

It is an opportunity for people who left Centralia because of the coal fire burning underneath the town to get together "at least one more time," Patrick Rooney said Tuesday. The Locust Gap resident is a member of the reunion committee.

"Most of the residents left a piece of their heart behind when they were relocated," said committee member and Centralia native Michelle Stauffer, one of the first to be relocated.

"Although we are spread out all over, we are still a close-knit group and we keep in touch mainly through Facebook and are looking forward to reconnecting and reminiscing.

"They can take our homes and ZIP code away, but they can't take our memories."

Stauffer, who now lives in Virginia, said she was married in St. Ignatius Church in the borough, and her wedding reception was held in the municipal hall.

A fire set May 27, 1962, by fire company members to clean up the town dump before Memorial Day caused the demise of the Centralia, once a bustling coal mining town with as many as 2,700 residents.

Firefighters thought they had extinguished the dump blaze, but it spread through an opening in the pit to abandoned coal mines under the town.

There isn't even a place in Centralia these days that can host the anniversary events. So they'll be held at the Centralia American Legion Post 608 in Wilburton, about 3 miles away.

An oldies dance is scheduled for 7 p.m. Friday with the 150th celebration beginning at 2 p.m. the following day. There is a charge for both events to cover expenses.

Saturday's events will include a catered lunch, music and a bonfire after dusk. Although the registration date has passed, Rooney said he anticipates more will show up than the 150 who have signed up.

A lot of people in their 70s and 80s are coming back, he said. Some of have not been back in years, he said.

Rooney, who moved out in 1985, anticipates most of those returning will visit Centralia.

Although Centralia was incorporated as a borough in 1866, its history dates to 1749 when Native Americans sold the land to colonial agents for 500 pounds. The town's original name was Bull's Head after a tavern that was opened in 1832.

According to historical accounts, Alexander Rea, a mining engineering, laid out streets and lots. He named the town Centreville, but because there was a Centreville in Schuylkill County, the name was changed to Centralia in 1865.

It once had seven churches, five hotels, two theaters, bank post office 14 stores, 27 saloons and public and parochial schools. But the Depression and a reduction in coal mining took its toll even well before the fire.

Total relocation of the boroughs residents, at a cost of $42 million, was the option chosen following a 1983 study commissioned by the federal government into how best to address the fire.

Once residents moved out, the impetus to stop the fire was gone and a trench promised by the state to stop the blaze was never dug, said Centralia historian and former Patriot-News reporter David P. DeKok.

With the population down to about 50, then-Gov. Robert P. Casey in 1992 authorized condemnation proceedings through the Columbia County Redevelopment Authority to obtain the rest of the land.

The Postal Service in 2002 discontinued the 17927 ZIP code and Gov. Ed Rendell in 2009 began the formal eviction of remaining residents.

A 20-year legal battle to stop condemnation proceedings ended in 2013 with a settlement of a federal lawsuit that resulted in the seven remaining residents being paid $349,500 for their properties with the provision they could stay in their homes until they die.

Today, Centralia has become a tourist attraction, although the clouds of steam are mostly gone. Graffiti covers much of a section Route 61 that was closed due to huge cracks opened by the fire.



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The Excluded Middle: A Skeptic Explores the Extraordinary - CSI

csicop.org

http://www.csicop.org/specialarticles/show/the_excluded_middle_a_skeptic_explores_the_extraordinary

Sounds Sciencey

Sharon Hill

May 20, 2014

I recently finished reading Ray Hyman's collection of papers and essays, The Elusive Quarry (1989). In it, Dr. Hyman talks about attending the Parapsychological Association convention in 1979 as a paranormal skeptic. The work he sees there is impressive and he is challenged by the findings of the high quality work. One concept I subscribe to - that is reinforced by Hyman's experiences - is that going to meetings run by advocates of a subject area in which you are generally skeptical is essential to fully understanding the topic. If you do not know all sides of the conversation, you should not be conversing authoritatively about it.



Program cover art

Cover art from the ETE conference program (Credit: Andy Sharp)

A few months ago, I was informed of the "Exploring the Extraordinary" (ETE) conference by George Hansen via email. George had read my Master's Thesis about use of science by amateur paranormal investigators and knew of my research into broader, Fortean topics. He thought this would be useful to me and it was close by, in Gettysburg. I had a look at the schedule; it was not the celebrity para-con like I had attended and reviewed last year. There were many academics speaking. This appeared far more professional. This would be my own opportunity to take a look at the work currently being done. I was excited to attend.

The conference took place in Pennsylvania Hall at Gettysburg College. The centerpiece of the campus, the building had been used as a hospital during the Battle of Gettysburg in July of 1863. Anyone who knows the spooky tales that have exploded in popularity in this battlefield community has heard of the administrators who took the elevator in Pennsylvania Hall back in time. When the doors opened upon the basement scene, as the story goes, they encountered a shocking scene of wartime horror – soldiers bloodied and traumatized packed into the space. They quickly pressed the buttons to close the door as a surgeon beckoned them to help. This location is a culturally haunted place fitting for the content and the tone of the presentations to come. (Though the gathering room was only two floors up, I contemplated taking the elevator to the basement but, ultimately, I didn't.)

This was the 6th conference for ETE, previously held at University of York in England. The main organizers and many presenters were from the U.K. and pleased to be visiting the states. The purpose of the ETE conference is to discuss experiences that transcend the mundane.

Attendee T. Peter Park, a long-time follower of paranormal research, wrote this about the conference on an online forum: (used with permission)

> The Exploring the Extraordinary network's members include many individuals from various academic disciplines, such as anthropology, art, English studies, folklore, film studies, geography, history, natural sciences, parapsychology, philosophy, physical sciences, psychology, religious studies, sociology, theatre studies, and theology--as well as those not affiliated with such institutions. It thus serves as an "amphibious" interface or contact point between the world of "mainstream" academia and the "liminal" subcultures (in the terminology of parapsychologist George Hansen) of people engaged in cultivating or exploring anomalous, extraordinary, "paranormal," "mystical," "magical," or "occult" experiences or interests often ignored or dismissed by academia for not fitting in with our society's prevailing concepts of the "rational," "realistic," and "scientific."

> The conference's 23 intriguing presentations on unusual, anomalous, and "liminal" experiences provided ample, flavorful food for thought for myself as a self-described "mental amphibian" equally at home in the seemingly disparate cultural worlds both of "straight" mainstream academic research and scholarship on the one hand and of probes into the off-beat, marginal, and anomalous outside the conventionally academically respectable on the other! Most of the speakers discussed ghosts, mediumship, and other evidence (or seeming evidence) for life after death, a few spoke on topics like UFO's, healing, and remarkable coincidences, and some others on historical and sociological aspects of paranormal investigation.
>
> Nearly all questioned our society's reigning cultural and philosophical paradigm of scientific materialism, where even religion is fastidiously confined to a purely spiritual realm with no messy, embarrassing causal interaction with observable events or objects in the physical world.

He aptly summed up my own feelings about being an "amphibian" between systems. By the end, I was facing questions about where I belongs, if anywhere.

As I sat down in the lecture room on the first day, I saw a diverse crowd nearly evenly split men/women and of a wide age range. I also found out on the first day, thanks to a hands-up poll request from one speaker, that I was in the extreme minority of the audience that did not subscribe to the idea of life after death. Since my like-minded friend Howard Lewis (of Skepreview.com) was only in attendance on the first day, I would be the lone "Skeptic" in the room for the remaining two days.

From prior experience at what I'll call an "advocate's" convention, by the third day my brain has reached its limit whereby I can no longer tolerate the hubris of people who *just know* all these fantastical things exist no matter what I or the scientific consensus states. That was *not* to be the case for the ETE event where I attended all but one or two of the talks in their entirety and stayed until the very end, even taking advantage of the final day's post event lunch to continue to talk with attendees. I enjoyed the entire event very much. It was well done, well organized and went off smoothly.

Since there were 24 full length talks over three days, I can't possibly recount them all so I will relate the highlights that were important to me as an active skeptical researcher of paranormal ideas.

Right off the mark was a fascinating talk about the importance of historical and socio-cultural settings of alleged haunting events. Christopher Laursen discussed some famous classic hauntings and poltergeist reports in the context of *those who lived next door*. What does the neighborhood have to do with the stigmatized location? Plenty. Several classic cases involved those who just moved in. The superstitious explanation was that the "rightful" owner, long deceased, did not particularly care for the new tenants. Laursen provided sound advice to those investigating a haunting (or any mystery) about scouting out the neighborhood. Question the people next door and those around the block who may "know things". Find out about the non-human neighbors like troublemaking wildlife or feral animals, and explore the general environment including previous land uses and geology. This presentation took a nice middle ground for both pro-paranormal and skeptical investigators.

I was quickly impressed that this many speakers and most of the audience was scholarly and typically well versed in the history and sociology of ghosts along with religious frameworks and the mythology of hauntings. This was quite the change from any other conference (paranormal or skeptical) that I've been to and I was enjoying the elevated discussion.

The next speaker was Stephanie Boothby, a graduate student in anthropology from Florida. Stephanie had immersed herself into the culture of the paranormal investigator. She became part of the group. She related the organization of various level of paranormal involvement from "weekend warriors" through "scientific" researchers to the "deliverance teams" performing exorcisms. Throughout her talk I saw so much overlap with my own interests, I was eager to speak to her and show her my work on amateur investigators.

Though, as I remarked, nearly all the participants at the conference appeared to have a well-rounded education in paranormal research history, Stephanie noted that this is the opposite of the typical participants in ghost hunting. Surprisingly, her local group was not interested in parapsychology or what had been documented before. She noted (as I had), the tension, a love-hate relationship, of these participants with academics and science in general. Science has such a great social cachet that paranormalists use a pretend version of it in their procedures – equipment, jargon, made up "theories" – even though they have no scientific background.

The science is strictly for show. In reality, they distrust academics and stay away from research by "ivory tower scientists", jealous of their standing and funding.

Stephanie 's observations, as well as the array of other speaker's viewpoints throughout the event, is a clear reminder of the unique goals and methods used in examining extraordinary phenomena. Those who view paranormal investigation solely via pop culture media will certainly miss the depth and variety of approaches used and the usefulness in studying humans' relationship with the paranormal.

There were several non-academic speakers who talked about their personal experiences and belief in non-scientific ideas like "energy fields". One woman described her unintentional involvement in Electronic Voice Phenomena after perceiving oddities on devices during the time surrounding her brother-in-law's death. There was a self-described medium who noted he was happy to have skeptical people in the audience. However, this was after he told a skeptic-themed joke, and expressed an anti-science sentiment and a need to "beat the skeptics". His description of the scientific method was the stereotypical oversimplification; he appeared generally poorly informed and made factual errors.

Attending events outside your own frame of reference involves getting into a suitable frame of mind. It's often helpful to suspend judgement and just listen. Imants Baruss spoke of invisible intelligences and how they can help us. His view was that the 130 years of research from the Society of Psychical Research favored the "survival" hypothesis – that something of us survives past our death. It's curious how people can view the same data in remarkably different ways. I would totally disagree with the persuasiveness of the evidence for life after death. I also strongly opposed Baruss' view that subscribing to methodological naturalism is "scientism", not science. This is one of many examples I've seen of the paranormal advocate's desire to bend or change the rules of science to accommodate their favored ideas instead of abiding by the strict framework of scientific research. Oddly, Baruss noted that he wished the stigma of studying life after death would be removed. Stigma from what population? Paranormal research is more popular than ever with the public! The deserved stigma by science is due to parapsychology not yet ensconced upon a sound foundation. If they can build that (been trying for over a century now), the stigma would evaporate.

The Keynote the first day was given by Dr. Julie Beischel, an independent researcher who runs the Windbridge Institute for Applied Research in Human Potential. Beischel is a scientist trained in pharmacology, toxicology, microbiology, immunology but chose to leave those areas to focus on this unique research project of conducting experiments on mediums under controlled conditions. I learned a lot from her talk regarding the state of mediumship research. I'm not sure what I thought the state of it was prior to this, I guess I didn't think it was even going on, but now I know that there remains about 10 serious researchers around the world. She was clear that previous research was not enough to conclusively show life after death.

I learned about the stalemate currently existing in psi research – survival psi versus somatic psi. The survival hypothesis means that the medium is getting information from the dead. Somatic psi is the hypothesis that the medium is using clairvoyance or telepathy through the living to gain information. It's a difficult test to distinguish one from the other (how can you confirm the information?), though psychics say that it feels different.

Let's say mediums can really communicate with the dead. What good is this revelation? Beischel proposed it be used for criminal investigations, to locate missing persons/animals, and in grief counseling. With this statement, it seems to me like wishful thinking that could lead a researcher to see more than what is really there in the data. Psychics have been claiming forever that they can speak with the dead but they fail under controlled conditions. The ability has not been demonstrated, It's not reasonable to jump to grander ideas regarding its use prior to its establishment as genuine.

With Beischel, I felt this underlying attitude of bitterness, resentment or perhaps frustration toward science. She explains that her research is "proof-focused", not science-based. "Proof" is a word I never hear scientists say in that context. The Windbridge experiments include controls for fraud, cold reading, generalization, cueing and rater bias. Target and decoy readings are uses and the sitter scores the results. Twenty mediums have been certified for the Windbridge institute to meet the criteria to qualify for the research. About 25% of the applicants fail. What is missing with Beshel's description of the Windbridge Institute work is the concept that scientific theories provide a model for how the way world works and we continually strive to improve the model to use in prediction and understanding. The model of survival psi is a tremendously weak structure supported by tiny bits of solid here and there, taped and held together with lots of hope. I don't imagine Beischel's work will produce

important or useful results but I would very much like to see what does come out.

If mediumship is real (that's a really big IF), it is clearly not widespread among the population. The error rate for mediums remains high and efficacy is currently no better than using conventional detective means or inquiry skills to reach the same outcome. Grief treatment is a controversial use of mediums. Beischel referred to a study showing those who participated in a medium session in which they claimed they talked to the dead felt better in their emotional state. I got the ethical heebie-jeebies at this point. It was even suggested that mental health professionals learn about mediumship for their clients and integrate medium readings into treatment options. Yikes. Take several steps back from this ledge...

Again, the overlooked fact is that mediumship sessions may have an effect but the basis of that treatment HAS NOT been established. Is that ethical and ultimately beneficial to the client?

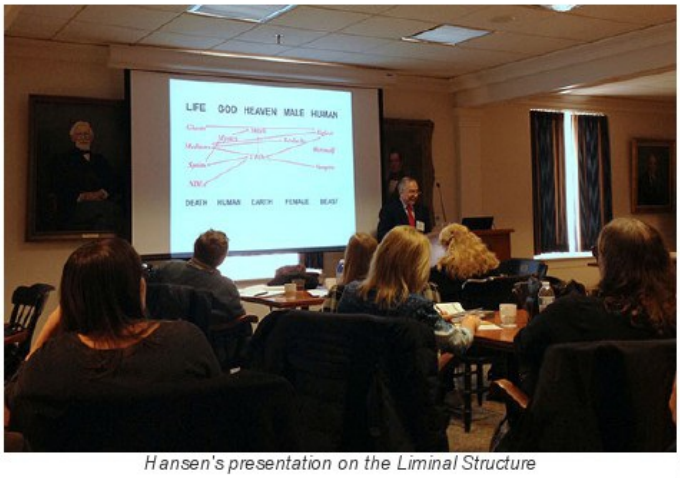
Thought-provoking bits and pieces were dropped here and there in Beischel's talk. She described research that was beginning with animals. They are currently recruiting for a project with those who took care of animals that had recently died. I had great difficulty with this. How do live animals understand the questions, let alone dead ones? Their perception and brains were different than ours in life. The answers to the mediums are said to come as visuals, feelings and smells. How this is translated to human perception by the medium is unexplained.

Another interesting piece of info is that a Portuguese drug company, Bial, is the leading provider of grants towards parapsychology research. Are they hedging their bets or is someone from the company just really interested in this field?

By the end of the talk, I admired Beischel for her risk-taking in starting the research but felt she was heading towards a dead end. She invested heavily in her personal experiences and actually mentioned her belief in astrology. The argument for mediumship research is terribly weak. We are looking at the tiniest glimmer of significance, an effect that could be wiped away by finding human error. To base a career on this, after the decades of research with no sound progress, seems ill-advised.

The juxtaposition of scientific procedure versus reliance on emotion generated from personal experiences from the presenters was discordant. It felt all over the place, undisciplined, unstructured, and, at times, arrogantly independent. Even so, there were examples of freeing and unique methodology. Rebecca Davies asked us to contemplate the color red through sound. Imagine that! It's hard but it was fascinating. We all sat through long, loud, sometimes torturous audio responses to a red hue. This was an example of differences in perception. I thought it was a good lesson. This project sounds odd but it certainly meant something to Davies and it was a unique approach that elicited visceral, non-rational responses. We need to go there sometimes.

It was time for another personal revelation.



Hansen's presentation on the Liminal Structure

Hansen's presentation on the Liminal Structure. (Photo by author)

Between life and death, male and female, human and god, man and beast, there is mystery, confusion and instability. Society has issues with mediums, shamans, homosexuals, angels, Bigfoot, aliens. The middle ground is unnatural. George Hansen explained liminality, this area of betwixt and between, in a way that actually made some sense. We are uncomfortable with the in-between, the anti-structure, the excluded middle. This got me thinking how unnatural it was for me to be in this setting, exploring the middle ground between skeptic and believer; I'm the counter-advocate finding common ground with the advocates. Not many people consider venturing here because it is profoundly uncomfortable. I don't really fit in either place. Perhaps the excluded middle is my safe space to be alone and really think in all directions. This talk on liminality was perhaps the perfect core for the entire conference as almost all talks touched upon it indirectly. It resonated with me in an unexpected second aspect.

The one talk specific to Gettysburg was a nice surprise. John Sabol is a performance archaeologist and studies ghosts. This takes some explanation: John has training in archaeology, social anthropology, and as an actor. He does not buy into the ridiculous TV ghost hunter ways of prodding the spirits to perform on command. His approach is culturally-based and, admittedly, a bit strange to observe – addressing the ghosts in their own framework of understanding. Loudly. To do this, he uses period clothes, music, language and other sounds as trigger objects, including barking orders at soldiers. It seems ridiculous to those of us that don't think spirits of the dead are really hanging around. But, John makes a good point that it's even sillier to ask a ghost from another era to turn on a modern flashlight or make the lights on your gadget dance. John attempts to humanizes the ghost, not demonize it. That's more respectful than the paranormal investigators on TV. It may be just as unfounded, since I don't see conclusive evidence for ghosts, but it seems more thoughtful.

It's a trip to listen to John talk. Just because I think his methods and ideas are wacky does not mean I don't enjoy listening to other's opinions. John has an plan for a TV show in the works. I imagine if that comes to fruition it will be something else and roundly entertaining.

Contemporary material about ghosts in the public is influenced in large part by economics – tourism, advertising, and what sells for the big and small screen. Gettysburg has become a ghostie mecca because the culture has allowed it to be so and some locals encouraged it. There were no seances here during the advent of spiritualism. There were no ghost tours in the 1970s. Why did the plethora of Gettysburg ghosts wait 100 years to manifest? It's a curious question – with a likely cultural answer (as we can frame almost all aspects of the ghost phenomena). An interesting aside was made by T.P. Park [whom I quoted above] who observed that it's currently not culturally acceptable to ghost hunt in Auschwitz or at Hiroshima. Maybe that will happen soon. It just takes a trailblazer.

Educator Jennifer Lyke had an intriguing view on teaching critical thinking. Again, we circle back to the idea of the excluded middle. She finds a problem with categories like “believers” vs “skeptics” since those are overly general. In the real world, it is more like a continuum and people's points of view vary depending on the subject.

Skeptics, she says, have a tendency to overreach with blanket explanations that sound plausible. For example, when we say alien abduction accounts are sleep paralysis, that is the end point of the story. That could be the end of critical thinking, she contends, but it shouldn't be since much remains unanswered about sleep paralysis. The media headlines tout out-of-body experiences as SOLVED. Not so. A good explanation is proposed but it's not time yet to wipe our hands and move on. All UFOs are not “swamp gas”. Not all Bigfoots are guys in suits. It's more complicated than that and a true interested person would not be so quick to dismiss.

Yet, we buy in to believe or dismiss. Why? Because of our intolerance of ambiguity. Lyke attempts to push the two sides of the believer/skeptic spectrum together for more productive discussion – those that feel comfortable with one side must confront the opinions of the other. That can only improve understanding and tolerance. I agree and told her so. This is important work. I only wish it occurred earlier than university level.

Chase O'Gwin, while revealing a noticeable anti-skeptic chip on his shoulder, gave an informed presentation about the problems with the history of paranormal research. Today's celebrity investigators or self-styled researchers know hardly anything of the rich history. I have encountered this as a rule across the population interested in various paranormal topics. People calling themselves paranormal experts don't recognize the names Harry Price, William James, William Roll, or can tell me about spiritualism or the cultural history of ghosts. Dunning-Kruger effect, anyone?

Ghost researchers consider EVP (electronic voice phenomenon) key data about a haunting but have they actually thought about why it is or isn't good evidence? Chase spoke about the problems with EVP in that it comes across in the language of the listener, and confirms the afterlife belief of whatever faith the listener subscribes. If EVPs are everywhere, how do we know they are voices from the dead? Maybe it is macro-psychokinesis? Maybe it's subconscious messages from other living humans, maybe it's technopathy (users communicate with machines). Why are anomalous electromagnetic waves proof of survival? Why do ghost hunters not use Geiger counters anymore? Remember when poltergeist researchers thought the entity was manifest from human RSPK (recurrent spontaneous psychokinesis), not demons or ghosts? Why is energy now assumed to be from the discarnate instead of the living? With orbs thoroughly explained, why do they keep showing up as evidence of spirits? Also, why are ghosts seen as vaporous now when they used to be described as quite solid? All these questions spotlight the inconsistency and disorganization of modern paranormal

research and make the participants looks rather silly. The lack of attention to basic questions such as these confirms how half-baked and ineffective most paranormal scholarship is right now. Those who fail to study the past are doomed...

Finally, Eric Ouellet proposed an alternative idea about the Belgian Air Force UFO flap in 1989-1990 as a collective manifestation of psi. I admit, I never thought of that option.

Ouellet found the reports were not like the popular press claimed. He tested a cultural model (surprise – displacement – decline – suppression) in which critical observers become involved, reduce the liminality, thereby eventually crushing the phenomena. Was this event a collective social psi manifestation prompted by social tensions at the time? I tend to see it more as a collective cultural interpretation of UFOs (alien threat) due to the prevailing social tensions. I don't know which way the arrow points and we may never know for sure.

With the blend of academics and non-academics at the ETE, it was obvious that there is a general misunderstanding about the scientific process and the value of that by those not trained in research methodology. This is exactly what is occurring among the amateur paranormal investigators all over the world. But, as I discovered with one non-academic presenter, her ultimate question was the same as mine – what happened here? We both want the best explanation. Since her options were less restrained by reliance on fact-based, established foundations, she is able to propose speculative hypotheses as explanations. Those possibilities make the field endlessly interesting to those unencumbered by scientific rigor. The tendency to venture outside the boundaries of established knowledge is so enticing due to the promise it holds that an underlying theme at ETE is clearly to "change the rules" in parapsychology. Less thinking, more feeling and a great increase in wiggle room always leads to better experimental results. The platform of science as the ultimate arbiter of truth claims is strongly challenged here.

The ETE meeting was not for the typical amateur ghost enthusiast. They would be lost. This is material they do not have a prerequisite foundation in and towards which they are hostile. During a coffee break, Stephanie and I talked about the need for a journal for amateurs to publish. They say they have all these cases and data but never do a damn thing with it, often with the excuse that "science" ignores it. How can we ignore if if we never see it written in an accessible way? You can't influence the field without being open to sharing, peer review, critique and testing. Would they take advantage of a publishing outlet? I suspect only a few would. There are too many who are self-satisfied being small time celebrities, just playing weekend warrior or pretend scientist. Real science and inquiry is too much work.

Why was I there?

In the lunch line on the first day, just after I had been outed as one of the "skeptics" in the crowd, one lady rather brusquely asked, "So you're one of the skeptics? Why are you here?"

For the same reason you are, lady, to learn and explore evidence and ideas. I felt privileged to be there and see many new points of view. There is a kernel of something interesting in whatever is said. It's impossible to get that deeper concept if you are prejudiced against the field entirely. Likewise, if you pigeonhole skeptics and close off the skeptical commentary, you risk continuing to waste effort, make mistakes, and fail to progress.

There is much to be seen on the "other" side. It may have nothing to do with ghosts, yet it is rather extraordinary.

Sharon Hill with authors and researchers of the paranormal George Hansen and Patrick Huyghe. (Photo by author)

Sharon Hill specializes in issues of science and the public and runs the Doubtful News website. Sharon can be reached at shill@centerforinquiry.net.



Sharon Hill with authors and researchers of the paranormal George Hansen and Patrick Huyghe

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DIGITAL JOURNAL

Family of boy killed by vampire cult mourn

BY JOHNTHOMAS DIDYMUS OCT 12, 2011 IN CRIME
http://www.digitaljournal.com/article/312658

Panama City - The family of Jake Hendershot, 16 year-old killed in July, are still mourning their son. One of the five arrested for murder of Jake, had said the victim was killed by a vampire cult.

According to MSNBC , the police, in September they arrested Joel Millsap, William Chase, Tammy Morris, James Gay and Stephanie Pistey, girlfriend of William Chase for murder of Jake.

A report by News Herald says Jake Hendershot , a former Hagerstown High School Student, in Parker, Florida was a model Christian youth who had been to South America on a mission trip to dig wells in jungle villages. According to his father Melvin Hendershot, a long-haul truck driver, Jake returned from his mission trip excited at the experience.

“He felt like he had accomplished something in life. He had done something for people who had no way to repay him … but they were really grateful.”

According to the News Herald's report, Jake began experimenting with drugs, alcohol and pot after his parents divorced in March. His mother Tommae Hendershot, said he was not a bad boy, but he was unhappy after his parents divorced.

Jake went to Florida on June 22nd to visit his biological mother Nancy Robinson, who had given Jake up to the Tommae and Melvin Hendershot after his birth. It was during the visit that he met Stephanie Pistey.

Nancy Robinson says she did not like Pistey the first time she saw her. There was something about Pistey that didn't seem right, Robinson said.

According to MSNBC, the murder of Jacob "Jake" Hendershot happened after two men of a vampire cult lured him into a house. Stephanie Pistley told Florida WBBH-TV that after Hendershot was lured into the house, William Chase, 17, and Joel Millsap, 25, beat and choked him to death. Pistey alleged that Joel Millsap attempted to cut Hendershot's throat.

A Daily Mail report suggests Hendershot might have been killed because he was dating Pistey, William Chase's girlfriend.

Both Millsap and Chase confessed to the police.

Pistey, according to MSNBC, said in the WBBH-TV interview,

"I know this is going to be crazy, but I believe that I'm a vampire and part werewolf."

Pistey, in her bizarre confession on camera, said she and Joel Millsap drank each others blood, but she denied she drank Jake Hendershot's blood.

The police arrested Tammy Morris, 30, on charges of accessory after the fact of murder. She was also charged with giving false information to the police. James Gay, 20, was charged with aggravated battery because, according to the police, he left the scene before Hendershot was choked to death.

Gather.com, comments on the increasing incidence of people believing they are vampires, and suggests young people might be getting their vampire inspirations from movies.

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'WHO ARE YOU WEARING?' GETS LITERAL WITH DNA-BASED FASHION

By **Bruce Brown** — July 18, 2016 8:38 AM



Soon, the answer to the perennial red carpet query, "Who are you wearing?" could take on a whole new dimension. Designer Tina Gorjanc is on the path to use deceased designer Alexander McQueen's DNA to create material for fashion and accessories, as reported on Quartz.

Slovenian-educated Gorjanc is working on her Masters degree in

Material Futures at Saint Martins College of Art and Design in London, according to her CV. Saint Martins is McQueen's alma mater. Examples of a jacket and a backpack from Grojanc's Pure Human project were made from pigskin. The jacket has a copy of one of McQueen's tattoos on the left collar and shoulder. The next step for Grojanc is to head to the lab to create materials for the "real" McQueen.

Related: Looking to create custom textiles? WOVNS combines fashion and tech

The plan is to grow "skin" from McQueen's DNA and then tan the skin to use to create leather jackets and bags. Grojanc said the skin will have tattoos the same "locations, size, and design" as McQueen's. In the lab, the skin will given moles and freckles created by DNA manipulation. The skin, like all undyed leather, also can be sunburned.

"With the tattoos and manipulation of freckles and sunburning, I wanted to showcase the material," said Gorjanc. "I think that was really important in terms of getting this connection between the jacket and McQueen."

While Gorjanc did not patent McQueen's DNA (you can't do that), she filed a patent application in May for "bioengineered genetic material that is grown in the lab using tissue-engineering technology and the process of de-extinction." As Quartz explained, "De-extinction allows you to extract genetic material from a deceased source."

The "source" for Gorjanc's McQueen eventual collection is hair samples which were put on the labels of a 1992 McQueen collection called "Jack the Ripper Stalks His Victims." Gorjance said she's "reasonably sure" the hair is authentic McQueen as she spoke to a model for the 1992 collection who said she was with him when he put the hair on the labels.

Gorjanc isn't interested in selling the works for people to actually wear.

She is more interested in developing the technology, which she says could create "sustainable, lab-grown leather that doesn't require slaughtering animals." She sees the eventual works as art that could be displayed in a gallery or museum, or possibly sold to a collector.

Before you plan a startup based on selling items based on celebrity DNA, you should be aware that it could get very dicey in a legal sense. A McQueen representative was positive about the project, Gorjanc said. While you can legally use others' "abandoned tissue," such as hair, according to Quartz, you cannot patent, acquire, or protect the rights to someone else's DNA.

If the technology Gorjanc is using goes more mainstream, it's not unforeseeable that people might want to create vests, jackets, or accessories from their own "leather" based on their DNA. There may come a time that when someone says they're wearing "Grandpa's vest," it'll mean something very different than it does now.

Also watch: Raimond de Hullu's vision for Oas1s green buildings

pinknews.co.uk

Father writes series of erotic novels in bid to turn gay son straight

PinkNews

- Joe Williams, *PinkNews*
- 3rd August 2016, 10:23 AM



What would J.K say?!? (Getty Images)

This man went to great lengths to 'cure' his gay son's sexuality.

Parents struggling to accept their child's homosexuality often go to great lengths in an attempt to 'cure' their offspring, whether it's sending them to 'gay cure' camps or having them hit with a bag of rocks.

However, a father from the UK decided upon a rather unique – and vomit inducing – way of ridding his son of his "gayness".



The father in question decided to write a series of erotic novels for own son, with the aim of arousing his and ultimately turning him straight.

The disturbing story was unveiled during an episode of the popular London podcast My Dad Wrote A Porno, which has developed a cult status among listeners.

The show sees host Jamie Morton read chapters from an erotic book written by his own father, although it was not written with his son in mind.

He is joined on the show by actor James Cooper and BBC Radio 1's Alice Levine, as the trio tells a host of hilariously disturbing anecdotes and quip about extracts from the book.

Yet even they were particularly unnerved when a listener wrote in to tell her own story of parent penned porn.

"Hi guys, I mentioned this podcast to my mum the other week and she told me a story too good not to share," listener Lindsay wrote.

“A few years ago my neighbour’s son came out as gay and his dad was less than pleased to say the least.

“Apparently, in his mind, all this boy needed to save him from this life of sin was some good old fashioned hot sexy straight porn.

“He searched far and wide but no existing porn was up to the task. If you want something done right, you have to do it yourself.”

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Utah couple auctions off giant, fire-spitting scorpion car | KSL.com

ksl.com

By Peter Rosen | Posted Jun 17th, 2016 @ 10:28am



A lot of unusual things are put up for sale on eBay, but few quite like what Utahns Kirk Jellum and his wife, Kristen Ulmer, are auctioning off — a giant metal fire-spitting scorpion.

"I bought shoes on eBay, but I've never bought a giant scorpion before," Ulmer said.

She said the whole thing began with a love story involving a giant rat.

"Well, I had an art car — a giant ... 23-foot rat — before I met my husband," Ulmer, a former extreme skier, said. "And then we went to Burning Man together and everybody saw it said, 'Is this your rat?' My husband, he said, 'No, it's my wife's rat' and finally, he got upset and said, 'OK, we're selling the rat, we're building something new.'"

In 2010, Jellum, an aerospace engineer with no art experience, built a giant fire-breathing praying mantis — now a Las Vegas tourist attraction.

"I'm the muse," Ulmer said. "My husband was peacocking for me. It's very romantic, very romantic for my husband ... to build me art cars. It makes me very happy."

A year later, he built the scorpion.

It's 55 feet long, 23 to 45 feet wide, 33 feet tall and weighs 28 thousand pounds. It has 21 hydraulic actuation points and seven computerized flame controls and it runs on diesel fuel. It was constructed around the body of a 1991 Department of Transportation boom truck.

It was originally built for a Burning Man fan from Utah, but was sold back to the couple.

They've started the bidding at $50,000. They said actually almost a quarter million dollars was spent on the giant bug.

They're parting with it, they said, because it's been taking up too much time and too much space.

Jellum isn't sure what kind of art car he'll build next, but it will, he said, involve fire.

"It's going to have really, really big flame effects because he knows that makes me happy," Ulmer said.

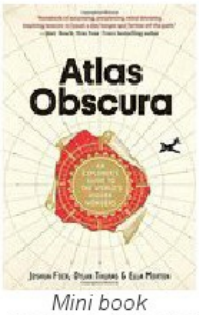
Updated: Friday June 17, 2016 10:36 pm

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At the First GOP Convention, the Party Chose a Rich Mutineer as Their Candidate

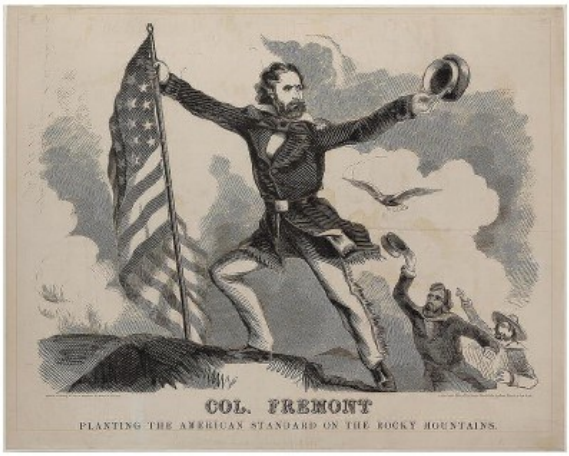
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John C. Frémont wanted to be governor of California a little too badly.

by Sarah Laskow
July 18, 2016



In 1856, the newly formed Republican Party nominated its first candidate for the American presidency. Hundreds of delegates had gathered in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, with the aim of sending into the election a candidate who would represent their antislavery position. The men of the Republican Party were drawn from a hodgepodge of political loyalties and backgrounds, and this is what united them: they believed slavery in the United States should be limited—even eliminated.

There were a handful of men the delegates considered for the nomination, but one man was an early frontrunner—John C. Frémont. The "Pathfinder," as he was known, had made his name exploring the western territories, and had the greatest name-recognition of the possible candidates. He was also, originally, a Southerner, an unusual trait among early Republicans, and had been openly and vocally opposed to slavery for decades. By the time of the final vote, three of the four other candidates had dropped out, and Frémont won the nomination handily, with 520 votes to his opponent's 37.

Frémont might have been famous, but for a presidential candidate, he had one unusual stain in his history. Less than a decade earlier, he had been tried and found guilty by the U.S. Army of insubordination and mutiny.



1856 campaign poster for John C. Frémont. (Image: Public domain) 1856

Frémont was known for his brashness. Whenever a more powerful person gave him a bit of leeway, he took the opportunity to take as much freedom for himself as possible.

He became famous through a combination of political patronage and daring. As an ambitious young topographer, held back by his birth out of wedlock, Frémont married the daughter of a powerful Washington senator. Then, under commissions acquired through his father-in-law's influence, Frémont set out west, to map routes to the Rocky Mountains and beyond.

Out in the field, Frémont navigated lands still controlled by native peoples or by Mexico, which governed the area that's now California, Nevada, Utah, and large parts of Arizona and New

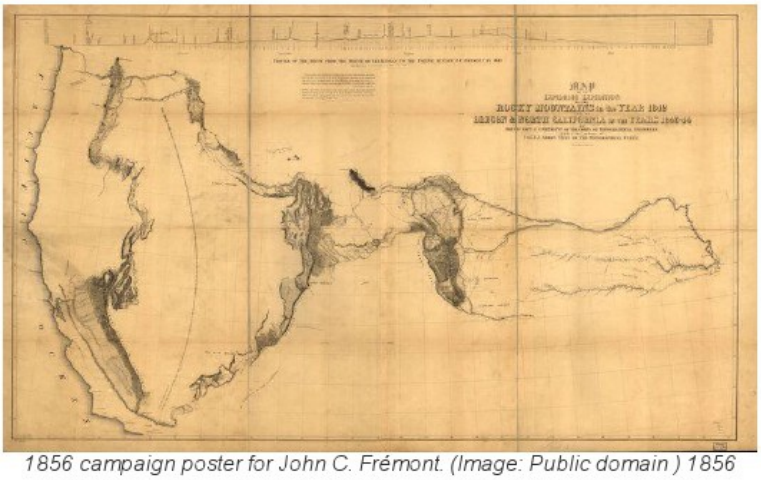
campaign poster for John C. Frémont. (Image: Public domain) John C. Frémont. (Image: Matthew Brady/J.C. Bottre/Public domain) John C. Frémont. (Image: Matthew Brady/J.C. Bottre/Public domain) The map made from Frémont's expeditions to the Rockies, Oregon, and California. (Image: LOC 96688041/Public domain) The map made from Frémont's expeditions to the Rockies, Oregon, and California. (Image: LOC 96688041/Public domain) The capture of Monterey. (Image: Adolphe Jean-Baptiste Bayot/Public domain)

Mexico. Frémont's journeys weren't just about cartography, though: his father-in-law believed in the Manifest Destiny doctrine, rationalizing expansionism, and those maps he was making were meant to help American pioneers take over the West.

On his third journey, Frémont dropped his role as an explorer and became a conqueror. When he arrived in California, Frémont was working for the Corps of Topographical Engineers, which was organized by the U.S. Army but was supposed to pursue scientific aims—documenting the region in maps and statistics. On his previous journeys, Frémont had studied the hydrology of the Great Basin that stretches across Nevada.

But this third expedition, though purportedly scientific in nature as well, included a group that was much larger and carried more weapons. The Mexican-American war had not yet begun, but as the U.S. and a newly independent Texas discussed a possible union, it was possible to foresee a conflict and a chance for the U.S. to seize still more territory.

Frémont and his men did not sally into California territory as a military force. The area's Mexican governor initially gave Frémont's expedition permission to enter, but soon grew suspicious of their motives and forced the group to retreat to Oregon. Yet after receiving orders from D.C.—it's never been clear exactly what they said—Frémont moved back into California.



1856 campaign poster for John C. Frémont. (Image: Public domain) 1856 campaign poster for John C. Frémont. (Image: Public domain) John C. Frémont. (Image: Matthew Brady/J.C. Bottre/Public domain) John C. Frémont. (Image: Matthew Brady/J.C. Bottre/Public domain) The map made from Frémont's expeditions to the Rockies, Oregon, and California. (Image: LOC 96688041/Public domain) The map made from Frémont's expeditions to the Rockies, Oregon, and California. (Image: LOC 96688041/Public domain) The capture of Monterey. (Image: Adolphe Jean-Baptiste Bayot/Public domain)

Back in Mexican territory, Frémont did what he could to wrest control from the authorities without declaring war. His small band of men wasn't going to take over California on their own. But he did help instigate the Bear Flag rebels—a small group of Americans living in California who revolted against Mexican authorities—to take over Sonoma and form their own government. The rebellion had started.

Not long after, the U.S. Navy arrived on the California coast. The ships had been sent to the Pacific to guard U.S. interests against the British, who, American leaders thought, had their own designs on California. When naval forces found that Frémont had already sparked an American rebellion in the area, they jumped into the battle and started conquering coastal cities. Once the Navy arrived, Frémont dropped all pretense of being a disinterested scientist. He learned that he had been given an military office—he was now a lieutenant general in the Army, and he led his small force of Americans in battles that helped take control of the coast.

The American effort to conquer California wasn't as organized as it might have been, though. Soon, besides Frémont, there were two major military leaders in California, Commodore Robert Stockton,

of the Navy, and General Stephen Kearny, of the Army. Each of these men thought the conquest and governance of California was his responsibility. Neither was inclined to obey the other. Frémont was caught between them—and his efforts to turn the situation to his own advantage went badly.



1856 campaign poster for John C. Frémont. (Image: Public domain) 1856 campaign poster for John C. Frémont. (Image: Public domain) John C. Frémont. (Image: Matthew Brady/J.C. Bottre/Public domain) John C. Frémont. (Image: Matthew Brady/J.C. Bottre/Public domain) The map made from Frémont's expeditions to the Rockies, Oregon, and California. (Image: LOC 96688041/Public domain) The map made from Frémont's expeditions to the Rockies, Oregon, and California. (Image: LOC 96688041/Public domain) The capture of Monterey. (Image: Adolphe Jean-Baptiste Bayot/Public domain)

Once California was in American hands, the military leaders needed to set up a system to control it—they needed a governor. Commodore Stockton had a claim to the office: his forces had taken control of California before Kearny's forces had even arrived. Kearny had a claim, too: his orders from the Army were to take over California and install himself as military governor.

As the hero who had launched the whole campaign and taken control of key cities, including Los Angeles, Frémont had his own designs on the office. At one point, Stockton, Frémont and Kearny all claimed to be governor of California. But when Stockton left the area, he named Frémont military governor, perhaps just to needle Kearny.

Frémont ran with it, and when Kearny tried to order him around, he told the General that, until he was shown good reason, he would continue to follow the authority of Stockton, who had, after all, conquered California. Stockton had made Frémont governor, and so he was governor.

This conflict did not end well for Frémont. Eventually, Kearny, who was 30 years Frémont's senior, was able to maneuver around the younger man and assert his authority over the new territory. Frémont reluctantly agreed to travel back east, under Kearny's command.

By the time he reached Missouri, Frémont had been essentially taken prisoner, and in St. Louis, the General filed formal charges against the upstart explorer. Frémont was taken to D.C. to stand trial before a military court, for mutiny, insubordination and other offenses. If he was found guilty, the usual sentence for these charges was death.

Frémont seemed not to be as troubled by his situation as he ought to be. Reunited with his wife, they even spent one night driving "in the moonlight out to the school in Georgetown and looked up at the back window where the Colonel's first love letter had come up hidden in a basket of laundry," his wife later wrote. He mounted a thorough defense against Kearny's charges, arguing that he was obeying orders—just not Kearny's orders—and that the confusion could be traced all the way back to conflicting commissions from the Navy and Army in D.C.

The military men who sat in judgement did not buy it: Frémont was found guilty on all counts. But President Polk commuted his sentence, in part because of the influence of Frémont's father-in-law, but also out of a desire to avoid a greater scandal. Polk ordered Frémont back to his unit, but the mapmaker was no longer interested in serving in the Army. He quit and returned as a private citizen to California, where gold had been found on a property he owned.

Just a few years after being tried for mutiny, Frémont was rich, and when California became a state, he was voted in as one of its first senators. He didn't hold the position for long—he lost it because of his anti-slavery stance. But that made him an ideal candidate for the new Republican Party, which ran him under the slogan: Free Soil, Free Men, Frémont.

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Catch of the day! Fishermen stunned after SUBMARINE strays into their nets

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Catch of the day! Fishermen stunned after SUBMARINE strays into their nets

FISHERMEN were left stunned after catching a submarine in their nets.

PUBLISHED: 19:09, Wed, Jul 13, 2016 | UPDATED: 19:25, Wed, Jul 13, 2016





WIKIPEDIA / GETTY

Portuguese submarine Tridente strayed into the Dayton's fishing nets

The French crew of the Dayton were initially unaware that the 220ft Portuguese submarine Tridente had strayed into their nets while they fished just off the Cornish coast.

The incident happened 34 miles south east of Lizard Point while the warship was on a training exercise.

Portugal's Armed Forces general staff said the 2,000-tonne submarine was under the water when it got too close to the boat from Saint-Brieuc in Brittany.

When the commander realised what had happened, he ordered the vessel to surface carefully and then crews of both submarine and fishing boat spent two hours disentangling the nets.

French maritime authorities confirmed there had been no injuries or serious damage.

A spokesman said: “The submarine immediately surfaced and made contact with the trawler.”



WIKIPEDIA

The incident happened while the warship was on a training exercise

The electric powered submarine initially headed for Plymouth's Devonport naval dockyard but a spokesman for the Royal Navy said it was no longer there and was not expected to return.

The Daytona is understood to have sailed back to France without requesting assistance from the coastguard or other emergency services.

18 Comments

6 minutes ago
Jonkat
Why were two foreign vessels operating in UK waters anyway ? One taking our fish, putting our fishermen out of work and making fish more expensive to buy here. The other a potential threat the Royal Navy should have been all over.
4 hours ago
dustyjack
Who writes this crap? The submarine is not 'electric powered'. Deisel-electric maybe but not electric. Where would they plug it in?
14 minutes ago
ASneakierMailman
Also, "The electric powered submarine initially headed for Plymouth's Devonport naval dockyard but a spokesman for the Royal Navy said it was no longer there and was not expected to return."- the dockyard is gone?!
8 minutes ago
Jonkat
Could "electric" not be a euphemism for nuclear powered ? i.e. generating its own electricity to run on.
5 hours ago
ADavie
Nicking our fish as usual .
11 hours ago
Lord Justin
I presume they threw it back to avoid being fined for exceeding EU submarine quotas?
14 hours ago
EyeRobot
So. A French fishing vessel AND a Portuguese submarine messing about just off our coastline. You couldn't make it up! Of, course - we're still in the EU!
13 hours ago
AlHamilton
IIRC most NATO subs exercise off Plymouth because the Brits run the NATO ASW courses. And 34 miles SE of the Lizard slightly on the "French" side of the channel.
7 hours ago
ToyToy1
Hopefully. we may soon assume this situation will be not recur?
15 hours ago
[removed]
This comment is awaiting moderation
14 hours ago
EyeRobot
F. Off. Scam merchant.
16 hours ago
jagman
should of ripped their nets to bits
14 hours ago
EyeRobot
have
17 hours ago

Stilton
How long before the French and others stop fishing UK waters, one wonders.
(edited)15 hours ago
arthermo
A major plus of our leaving the ghastly EU. Fishing off the coast of Cornwall whilst there are virtually no fishing boats left in our harbours, small wonder the EU don't want us to leave!!!
7 hours ago
ToyToy1
The result of Heath's grovelling to get us into the E.C.!
17 hours ago
AlHamilton
We do not wish to share the seas
With submarines such as these
Especially Portuguese
With apologies to H. Belloc.
15 hours ago
tommski
Nice
7 hours ago
ToyToy1
Our, "Oldest Ally",?

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ARCHAEOLOGY

Archaeology Magazine

Fit for a War God

By JARRETT A. LOBELL

Monday, June 13, 2016



Trenches Oman weapons block2

(© Guillaume Gernez / Mission archéologique française en Oman central)

Bronze quivers with arrows (top), bronze bows (above, left), and building site, Mudhmar East, Oman (above, right)**Archaeologists from the** French National Center for Scientific Research working in a large building at the site of Mudhmar East near the city of Adam in Oman have made an "exceptional find." Inside the structure, which is thought to have had a religious function, the team uncovered a collection of bronze weapons dating to between 900 and 600 B.C. The metal artifacts—two very rare quivers (ordinarily made of leather) with arrows, five battleaxes, five daggers, 50 arrowheads, and five bows, are too small to have been used in combat and were, explains project director Guillaume Gernez, perhaps intended as offerings to a war god. This region of the Arabian Peninsula, which sits at an important crossroads of ancient trade routes on the border between Oman's desert and oases, is almost entirely archaeologically unexplored.

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Last Updated Wednesday, June 15, 2016 9:53AM EDT ctvnews.ca

http://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/man-charged-after-fiery-argument-over-whether-earth-is-flat-or-round-1.2945537

Man charged after fiery argument over whether Earth is flat or round

A 56-year-old man in eastern Ontario is wanted by police on a mischief charge, after he allegedly threw a propane tank into a fire during an argument with his son's girlfriend over whether the Earth is flat or round.

Police say the argument broke out among three family members who were sitting around a campfire at St. Lawrence Park, in Brockville, Ont., on Monday. A woman refused to back down from her assertion that the Earth is flat, and her attitude ultimately pushed her boyfriend's father over the edge.

After attempting to drop several truth bombs about the shape of the planet, the 56-year-old man started throwing items into the fire, including a propane tank.



Brockville Police

CTV Ottawa

Police and firefighters were called to the scene of the argument to extinguish the flames.

The man fled the scene and is expected to face mischief charges when he is apprehended, police said in a statement.

"Neither party would change their views," police said in a statement.

The Brockville spat is only the latest flat-Earth debate to make headlines. In January, recording artist B.o.B. got into a heated Twitter war with astrophysicist Neil DeGrasse Tyson over the shape of the Earth. B.o.B. had argued that the Earth is pear-shaped, and claimed there was a conspiracy to cover it up.

For the record, Ferdinand Magellan led the first expedition to successfully circumnavigate the round Earth, from 1519-1522. Magellan himself did not live to see the end of the journey.

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The Folklore of Shoe-Shaped Confetti

wordpress.com

https://theconcealedrevealed.wordpress.com/2016/07/28/the-folklore-of-shoe-shaped-confetti/

The Concealed Revealed

Shedding light on the concealed object, revealed



On July 28, 2016July 28, 2016 By Ceri Houlbrook

The wedding season is upon us and, in preparation for it, I spent last Saturday shopping for the essentials: a new dress (or three), 'congratulations' cards, and gifts that the bride and groom are never going to use (does anyone ever really want candlesticks?). It was as I waded indecisively through the swathes of packets of confetti – paper, metallic, freeze-dried flower petals – that I came across a type I hadn't seen before: shoe-shaped confetti.



Shoe Confetti

At first I dismissed it as just another commercial gimmick but then I made a connection with the custom of hanging shoes off the back of wedding cars, and I began to wonder whether those stiletto-shaped pieces of shiny pink PVC might actually have some basis in folklore.



Wedding Car

It turns out that the tying of shoes to the back of a wedding car stems from an earlier tradition – that of throwing shoes after the bride and groom. We can see this in a drawing from Christine Hole's 1940 *English Folklore*.

In Fletcher Moss's 1898 *Folk-Lore: Old Customs and Tales of my Neighbours*, he writes of how 'The custom of throwing the shoe after a newly-wedded pair when they leave the bride's home has a symbolical meaning…[the shoe] is the symbol of authority, and is given to or thrown after the bridegroom when he takes the bride from her home, signifying that he is to have dominion over her'. This links in with the custom of the father-of-



Throwing Shoes Wedding Hole 1940

the-bride presenting a shoe to the groom, marking the transference of power over the bride.

It also links in with the belief that possessing somebody's shoe gives you a certain authority over them – magically speaking. In 1644 there was a Scottish witchcraft trial in which the purported sorcerer Patrick Malcolm was accused of trying to acquire a woman's left shoe in order to control her and force her to follow him.

The feminist in me notes it's not actually that hard to reconcile those pink stiletto-shaped confetti pieces with female oppression – but the folklorist in me also notes that the shoe isn't necessarily a symbol of authority. At its most basic level – as a tool that aids the getting from A to B – the shoe symbolises travel. So perhaps the shoe's association with weddings stems from the fact that weddings are essentially journeys. Traditionally (albeit not so much anymore) for a bride this journey was literal; she leaves her parents' home and moves into her husband's. But for both parties it's intended as a spiritual journey, and perhaps the shoe was meant to represent that.

The shoe also enjoys another level of symbolism that's probably pertinent to the wedding custom. The shoe is, as has been explored elsewhere on this blog, a symbol of the wearer themselves and, by being worn by them, it becomes imbued with their essence, strength, and life experiences – essence, strength, and experience that can be passed on to somebody else.

Radford and Radford, in their 1948 *Encyclopaedia of Superstitions*, write of this transference. 'Until very recently, shoes were often thrown after ships leaving port, or people beginning a journey or a new enterprise, or taking up new work. By doing this, the throwers conveyed luck to ship or individual concerned, probably because they were endowing them with a little of their own life-essence or strength'.

This would explain why this 1854 sketch from *Punch* magazine shows Queen Victoria throwing a shoe at her soldiers as they depart for the Crimean War. She was imparting them with some of her own luck.



Lovett has some interesting things to say about this in his 1925 book *Magic in Modern London*: 'The shoes used in the "good old days" were very old and well worn out. Also they must have been worn by old people who had led good and useful lives. The wish at the throwing of these shoes was this: 'May your path through life be as good and as happy and as long as that of the owner of this shoe."

So those pink pieces of shoe-shaped confetti may have actually derived from this belief that shoes possess the luck, essence, and strength of their past wearers – by throwing shoes at the bride and groom, you're imparting that luck, essence, and strength onto them. It's the ultimate wedding present.

Queen Victoria **In fact, come to think of it, I might return the candlesticks and wrap up my old pair of Dr Martens instead…**

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https://newrepublic.com/article/134271/frankensteins-monster-became-human



How Frankenstein's Monster Became Human

Two hundred years ago, Mary Shelley spent a night telling ghost stories at the Villa Diodati in Switzerland.

By Francine Prose

June 16, 2016

Illustrations by Eko

In the introduction to the 1831 edition of *Frankenstein*, which was originally published anonymously in 1818 and which over the intervening years (thanks partly to a series of low-comedy theatrical adaptations) had become a bestseller, Mary Shelley offered a persuasive and romantic explanation of how her book came to be written. The account of where and how Mary Shelley's novel originated may be among the most famous creation stories in literature; we know, or think we know, the circumstances and the pressures under which a very young woman turned a sort of parlor game into a book that would long outlive her.

It was the summer of 1816. Mary Shelley was eighteen years old. Two years before, she had fallen in love with the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley, a frequent visitor to the home of her father, William Godwin, the political radical, freethinker, novelist, and, most famously, the author of *An Enquiry Concerning Political Justice*. Mary's mother, the equally radical and perhaps even more unconventional Mary Wollstonecraft, had written *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, a protofeminist work that emphasized the importance of educating females. Before conquering her disapproval of the institution of marriage in order to marry Godwin, who shared her opinion of state-sanctioned wedlock, Mary Wollstonecraft borne an illegitimate daughter, Fanny, to an American entrepreneur and cad named Gilbert Imlay, whom she had met in Paris, where she had gone to observe, firsthand, the aftermath of the French Revolution. Mary Wollstonecraft died of an infection, within days of giving birth to her second daughter, Mary.

Having reversed his position on marriage, Godwin wed again. Mary Godwin despised her new stepmother, who brought to the household her own children: Charles and Jane, a high-strung, impulsive girl, two years younger than Mary. Jane, who would later rechristen herself Claire, flirted intensely with Shelley and was, for much of Mary Shelley's early married life, the bane of her existence.

When he began visiting Godwin, Shelley was married and the father of a child. Nonetheless, he and Mary fell passionately in love, and they eloped and—together with fifteen-year-old Jane—left London for the Continent. What followed was a difficult period, its sufferings mediated only by the deepening of the young couple's love. The emotionally volatile threesome traveled semiconstantly, under adverse conditions and nearly always on the verge of destitution. Mary gave birth to a baby, a daughter who was born prematurely and died after a few days.

Eventually Mary, Percy, and Jane (now Claire) came to rest at a cottage on the shores of Lac Leman in Switzerland, not far from where Lord Byron, who had become Claire's lover, was staying, at the Villa Diodati. The group—Percy and Mary, Byron and Claire, and Byron's physician, John William Polidori—had planned on spending the summer enjoying the beauties of the landscape and the lake. But when the weather turned cold and rainy—a volcanic eruption had turned it into one of the most inclement summers in European history—they sought another way to amuse themselves.

Perhaps in search of a respite from the long hours of intense and fevered conversation, the friends, who had been reading ghost stories translated from the German, agreed (at Byron's suggestion) each to write a tale of the supernatural. The preface that Shelley wrote to the original 1818 edition of Frankenstein—an introduction that caused many to conclude that the book had been written by the poet himself—contains a somewhat simpler, less personal, and more truncated version of the events leading up to the novel's composition than his wife would offer thirteen years later: "The season was cold and rainy," wrote Shelley, "and in the evenings we crowded around a blazing wood fire, and occasionally amused ourselves with some German stories of ghosts, which happened to fall into our hands. These tales excited in us a playful desire of imitation. Two other friends…and myself agreed to write each a story founded on some supernatural occurrence."



Shelley wrote, and never finished, a story set in childhood. A fragmentary work about a vampire, was attributed to Byron and later published by Polidori, who was in fact its author. Less facile and more reticent than her lover and his friends, Mary claimed to have had a harder time with the assignment. Perhaps part of her difficulties stemmed from the tensions among the storytellers. Byron had little respect for Mary and, it seems, even less for Claire, who was pregnant with his child. Polidori seems to have been in love with Mary, and Shelley was torn between his admiration for Byron and his desire to keep peace within the group. But what must have posed even more of a challenge was creating the effect that she sought: a story "which would speak to the mysterious fears of our nature and awaken thrilling horror—one to make the reader dread to look round, to curdle the blood, and quicken the beatings of the heart.… I felt that blank incapability of invention which is the greatest misery of authorship, when dull Nothing replies to our anxious invocations. 'Have you thought of a story?' I was asked each morning, and each morning I was forced to reply with a mortifying negative."

One can hardly think of worse circumstances under which to create fiction than this ur-writer's colony from hell, but Mary Shelley persevered. She mostly listened to the conversations between her husband and Lord Byron, discussions about philosophy, about the possibility that "the principle of life" would ever be "discovered and communicated." They spoke about attempts to reanimate corpses of the newly deceased by the application of galvanic shocks, and about a Dr. Erasmus Darwin who was said to have preserved bits of vermicelli under glass until they began to move of their own volition. "Perhaps," she wrote, "the component parts of a creature might be manufactured, brought together, and endued with vital warmth."

During this time Mary may have been thinking of a trip that she and Shelley took, not long after their initial departure from London, along the Rhine, a region where there is a Frankenstein Castle and where, according to local legend, a young man named Konrad Dippel was accused of robbing graveyards for corpses that he believed could be reanimated by injecting them with a mixture of blood and bone.

One night, still puzzling over Byron's assignment and trying to sleep, Mary had a vision in which she saw "the pale student of unhallowed arts kneeling beside the thing he put together. I saw the hideous phantasm of a man stretched out, and then, on the working of some powerful engine, show signs of life and stir with an uneasy, half-vital motion." She lay awake, trying to imagine a story that would frighten the reader as much as she had been frightened, then realized that she had found it. "What terrified me will terrify others; and I need only describe the spectre which had haunted my midnight pillow. On the morrow I announced that I had thought of a story," and set herself to making "a transcript of the grim terrors of my waking dream." Shelley suggested that the narrative might be longer than what Mary originally had in mind.

The book was completed almost a year after their sojourn by the lake in June of 1817. In the interim, Mary and Percy returned to England. In October, Mary's half sister, Fanny Imlay, committed suicide. And at the end of 1816, the Shelleys were married in London, their union having been facilitated by the fact that Shelley's wife Harriet had drowned herself. Mary was pregnant with Shelley's child, doubtless a source of anxiety since her first child, Clara, had died soon after birth and Mary's own mother had died in childbirth. Little wonder, then, that the story Mary wrote would be so thoroughly steeped in violence, in grief, in loneliness and fear, in remorse and guilt.

In a survey of texts taught in schools, conducted by the Open Syllabus Project, Frankenstein is the fifth most commonly taught book and the most commonly taught literary text. And according to the preface to Miranda Seymour's marvelously lucid and comprehensive biography, Mary Shelley, "A recent survey among American children showed [Frankenstein's] name to be more familiar than that of the President." Seymour fails to note if the interlocutor asked the American children to distinguish between Frankenstein the scientist in the Shelley novel and Frankenstein the image of Boris Karloff, the monster in the 1931 film.

The fact that the novel is so widely taught is slightly more perplexing. It's understandable that, as a novel of ideas, it should serve as a convenient prompt to inspire class discussions on a range of important questions: What is a human being? Is it dangerous to play God? What are the ethical implications and limits of scientific research? What are the effects of isolation and alienation? But what makes it a slightly less obvious choice is the fact that it is a very difficult book—not so much because the language is old-fashioned but because the structure is exceedingly complex, containing stories within stories, letters within narratives, and multiple narrators; each segment of the novel informs and reflects upon the tone and content of the others.

The form of Frankenstein, the nest of stories within stories, each told by a different narrator, has mostly fallen out of fashion. But the "frame story" was very much in vogue during the heyday of the Gothic novel, a genre popular during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. *Frankenstein* is perhaps the most famous and enduring example, though Muriel Spark argues persuasively that it "was the first of a new and hybrid fictional species." Shelley's novel, Spark suggests, combines elements of the Gothic (the supernatural, the grotesque, the theme of pursuit, the frisson of terror) with a more modern portrayal of the relationship between Frankenstein and his monster. Caleb Williams, the novel that Mary's father William Godwin published in 1794, is also a frame narrative and also locks its two main characters in a murderous game of flight and pursuit. Emily Brontë employed a similar strategy in Wuthering Heights, which appeared in 1847: the character Lockwood's narrative (and diary entries) give way to, and are interspersed with, the housekeeper Nelly Dean's account of the dramatic events at Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange.

Gothic novels abound with manuscripts found in dusty trunks, with letters and pages ripped from journals, with narrators who happen to meet other narrators whose stories advance and explain their own. Such structures serves several purposes: they allow the writer to vary the pace and tone; they facilitate the introduction of information to which only one of the (multiple) narrators could have been privy; they provide the old-fashioned pleasures of eavesdropping on a storyteller telling a story; and they add an element of authority and credibility to a plot that contains fantastic and supernatural elements, and which might otherwise seem more unlikely than it does when we know that a presumably sane and reliable character is testifying to the truth of the wild events being described. The advantages of this method were not lost on Henry James. *The Turn of the Screw* is framed as a story told by a man who knew the ghost-plagued governess when he was younger, and who is in possession of a manuscript, written in her hand, that is "beyond everything… for general uncanny ugliness and horror and pain."



Something similar could be said about the ugliness and horror of the events in Frankenstein, another story within a frame. The outside frame of the narrative comes to us from a presumably reliable source: Captain Robert Walton, who is writing to his sister, Margaret. Having given up hope of succeeding as a poet, Walton is traveling to the North Pole to conduct scientific research. His desire to discover the secret of magnetism ("the wondrous power which attracts the needle") makes him the ideal listener for Frankenstein's tale of scientific experimentation gone disastrously wrong.

Everything about Walton's voice suggests rationality and plausibility, even as he describes what may be the most bizarre and disturbing (and certainly the most memorable) image in the novel, a "being which had the shape of a man, but apparently of gigantic stature" driving a dog sled across the icy wasteland. The next day, Walton's shipmates rescue yet another traveler, this one "not a savage inhabitant of some undiscovered island, but a European" (albeit with a foreign accent), who is half-frozen, half-dead, emaciated, stranded on an ice floe, also together with a dog sled, though only one of his dogs survives. As we learn, this unfortunate traveler has been pursuing the giant whom Walton and his crewmates saw the day before.

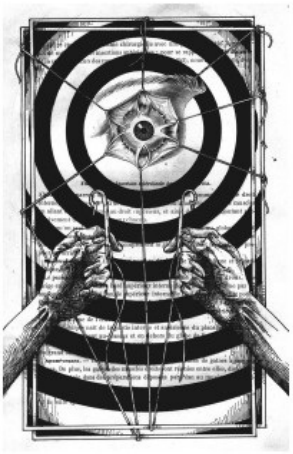
This hapless voyager is Dr. Victor Frankenstein, who takes over the role of narrator as he tells his harrowing tale to the captain. He describes his youth, his upbringing, his family, his early interest in science, and the way in which that interest lured him down a dangerous path of inquiry. Fascinated by the work of Paracelsus and Albertus Magnus, encouraged by his professors, he immersed himself in chemistry and anatomy. He had begun to wonder if the dead could be reanimated, if new life could be created from what remains after the soul has left the body. After spending "days and nights in vaults and charnel houses," observing "how the worm inherited the wonders of the eye and brain" and "the change from life to death, and death to life," Frankenstein achieved a breakthrough: "After days and nights of incredible labour and fatigue, I succeeded in discovering the cause of generation and life; nay, more, I myself became capable of bestowing animation upon lifeless matter."

To follow Frankenstein from his graveyard research to the point at which he is able to restore the dead to life places a certain strain on the reader's trust—even those readers steeped in the conventions of the Gothic. Ghosts? Certainly. Resurrection by science? Not so much. Wisely, Shelley has Frankenstein inform Captain Walton that he is withholding the secret of his success for the captain's protection, for his (and our) own good: "I see by your eagerness, and the wonder and

hope which your eyes express, my friend, that you expect to be informed of the secret with which I am acquainted; that cannot be: listen patiently until the end of my story, and you will easily perceive why I am reserved upon that subject. I will not lead you on, unguarded and ardent as I then was, to your destruction and infallible misery. Learn from me, if not by my precepts, at least by my example, how dangerous is the acquirement of knowledge…"

Thus Mary Shelley finesses what we might now term "a plot hole." Not only does the author advise us (in the interest of our own safety) to stop wondering about how precisely Frankenstein achieved his unholy effects, but she offers us yet another reason to keep reading (in case the mystery of the icy dog sled chase hasn't sufficiently intrigued us). Read on, we are told, and you will find out why you would rather not be able to duplicate Victor's experimental methods, "the horrors of my secret toil as I dabbled among the unhallowed damps of the grave or tortured the living animal to animate the lifeless clay."

The thrill of victory and discovery is transient. Almost as soon as he succeeds in bringing his creation to life, Frankenstein comes face to face with a being whose hideousness seems to suggest the presence of an equally unappealing nature. One can't help noting how often in the novel physical beauty is assumed to be an indication of good character, while ugliness is the manifestation of some moral flaw. This seemingly superficial but sadly accurate observation of how humans make judgments will become all the more important as the book progresses and as the monster—whose ugliness, size, and obvious abnormality are ultimately what make him a pariah—takes over the narrative and tells his own sad tale.



Frankenstein flees the monster and spends a restless night wandering the streets, where, by lucky accident, he runs into his friend Henry Clerval, who has just at that moment arrived from Switzerland. (The coincidence-averse may have reason to wonder at many such points in the book.)

Clerval remarks on the fact that his friend seems to be unwell: a bit of an understatement considering what the reader knows of Victor's recent travails. Feeling that he has no choice but to bring Clerval back to his rooms, while at the same time fearing that the monster will still be there, Frankenstein returns home in one of the novel's most successful moments—successful in the sense that we feel Shelley truly inhabiting her hero; she is making us feel what he feels:

> My hand was already on the lock of the door before I recollected myself. I then paused; and a cold shivering came over me. I threw the door forcibly open, as children are accustomed to do when they expect a spectre to stand in waiting for them on the other side; but nothing appeared. I stepped fearfully in. The apartment was empty; and my bedroom was also freed from its hideous guest.

What Victor first experiences as relief and joy is in fact a recurrence of exhaustion, fear, and horror; the monster has escaped. Victor falls ill and is nursed back to health by the loyal Clerval. Meanwhile the narrative switches back to the epistolary form, in this case a letter from Victor's beloved Elizabeth. The letter serves to introduce a character—the noble and loyal servant (though, we are informed, "a servant in Geneva does not mean the same thing as a servant in France and England") Justine, who has nursed Elizabeth's difficult aunt through her final illness, gone home to witness her own unstable and unkind mother's death, and returned to be a help to the household. All in all, there is only good news, and Victor's little brother William is reported to be thriving.

What seems like domestic gossip is in fact a clever setup for what is to follow. After a brief remission, during which Victor's health rallies and he pays a polite if not entirely honest visit to his former teachers, another letter comes. This one is from Victor's father, and is in effect an announcement that the nightmare has begun in earnest. Little William has been murdered.

It has often been remarked: the strangeness of Mary Shelley calling the dead child William, which was the name of her own beloved son, born in January 1816. But it has just as frequently been observed that it is common for writers, especially young ones, to spur themselves on with some version of their fantasies of the worst that could happen.

The unfortunate Justine, whom we have heard so much about in Elizabeth's letter, has been accused of William's murder. Like Victor, who knows that his monster is guilty of the crime but is certain that no one will believe him if he tells the truth, the reader can only watch as Justine is convicted of, and executed for, killing the child.

One hesitates to spoil the rest of Mary Shelley's wild, inventive, twisting, but admirably coherent plot—coherent, that is, by the standards of the Gothic novel, in which one often feels as if the author is piling event upon event to maintain a slightly frantic pace and an unbroken sequence of dramatic events. And yet one can't help noting a striking section that not only changes the way we read the novel but also alters our understanding of its author's sympathies.

Wracked by guilt, wandering in a sort of desperately penitential way through the mountains, Victor again meets his monster, who now tells his own story: how he discovered a hut occupied by a blind man and his family; how he learned, from observing this family, about human behavior and the ideal sweetness that suffuses a household governed by love; how he was able to master the rudiments of language; how he taught himself to read by studying discarded books; how he first saw his reflection and understood how "deformed and loathesome" he was; how he hoped that he could be accepted and welcomed by the old man's family despite his frightening appearance; and how cruelly that hope was dashed. Now his only wish is that Victor will create another artificial being, a mate for the monster, so that he will have a companion and not be doomed to go through the world alone.

In the process of telling his unhappy story, the monster shows himself capable of a complexity of moral and philosophical reflection that the other characters—spurred by near-diabolic ambition or overwhelmed by tragedy—cannot or will not allow themselves. Hidden outside the blind man's hut, listening to one of its residents read aloud from a book entitled *Ruins of Empires*, the monster reflects on the human condition:

> These wonderful narrations inspired me with strange feelings. Was man, indeed, at once so powerful, so virtuous, and magnificent, yet so vicious and base? He appeared at one time a mere scion of the evil principle, and at another as all that can be conceived of noble and godlike. To be a great and virtuous man appeared the highest honor that can befall a sensitive being; to be base and vicious, as many on record have been, appeared the lowest degradation, a condition more abject than that of the blind mole or harmless worm. For a long time I could not conceive how one man could go forth to murder his fellow, or even why there were laws and governments; but when I heard details of vice and bloodshed, my wonder ceased, and I turned away with disgust and loathing.

How brilliant of Mary Shelley to have put these thoughts and these speculations into the brain and the mouth of a monster, and how savvy of her—how wise, as they say, beyond her years—to realize that the questions that he asks have never been, will never be, answered. Nor will we tire of asking

these questions about the limits of science and the essence of a human being. Her novel functions as an intellectual challenge, inviting us to ponder the profound issues raised by the monster and by the very fact of his existence.

At the same time *Frankenstein* exerts an emotional pull as powerful as the one for which Mary Shelley claimed in her preface to have strived: "to speak to the mysterious fears of our nature and awaken thrilling horror." To this day, her book remains terrifying, not only because it traffics in graveyard horrors, in child murder and reanimated corpses, but also because it speaks to the anxieties to which all of us are prone. Which of us is immune to the fear that, like Victor Frankenstein, we may discover that our own work, our proudest creations, our offspring may turn against us—and that, with all the best intentions, we may wreak mayhem and havoc on those we love most, and least wish to hurt?

Reprinted with permission from Frankenstein: Or, The Modern Prometheus

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Illustration by Jun Cen

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The Strange Journey of Frederick Chopin's Heart

oddlyhistorical.com

http://www.oddlyhistorical.com/2016/03/27/chopins-heart/

For most, death is a somber and sedate affair. Bodies generally don't venture much further than the local mortuary to the cemetery. Some bodies, however, take a much more adventurous path to the hereafter. One good example was the strange story of Elmer McCurdy, a two-bit criminal whose mummified corpse ended up on the set of the 6 Million Dollar Man before finally being laid to rest.

A more famous historical figure had an afterlife that was no less strange. Frederick Chopin, the famous 19th century composer well known for his genius on the piano, died from what was long believed to be tuberculosis in 1849 in Paris. On his death bed, the composer asked that his heart be brought back to his native Poland even as his body rested in Paris.

The task fell to his eldest sister, Ludwika Jedrzejewicz, who had her brother's heart removed from his chest and placed in a sealed crystal jar filled with cognac. The jar was then encased in an urn of mahogany and oak. Then, a few months later, she smuggled the organ into Poland, passed Russian and Austrian inspectors, by hiding it under her cloak (other versions of the story have her smuggling the urn in under her dress.)

It wasn't until 1879 that Chopin's heart was placed in its present resting place—a pillar within the Holy Cross Church in Warsaw. A memorial slab placed on the pillar reads: "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

The pillar became a source of Polish pride, even as the country was occupied by tsarist forces, and it became something of a national monument once Poland declared independence in 1918. When the Nazis invaded Poland in 1939, the country was quickly bowled over by the German juggernaut. The occupiers did their level best to crush the spirit of the Poles. Aware of how much power Chopin and his music had to stir the hearts of the Polish people, the Nazis banned performances of his music and destroyed a statue erected in his honor.

Later, when the city was flattened in the fighting that occurred during the failed Warsaw Uprising, Holy Cross itself was damaged. Fearing that the heart was in danger of being destroyed, a German priest approached his Polish counterparts and asked if they'd let him remove the heart to a safer place. The Polish priests eventually agreed. Eventually, the heart came into the possession of a high-ranking S.S officer named Heinz Reinefarth. A fan of Chopin, he made certain the heart was kept safe at the Nazi headquarters.

When the fighting stopped, Erich von dem Bach Zelewski, the German commander in the region, returned the heart. He attempted to make quite a show of it, commissioning a film crew to document the transfer to the new archbishop of Warsaw. However, the lights set up to illuminate the spectacle malfunctioned, ruining the Nazi's propaganda attempt.

With the heart back in Polish hands, the priests of Holy Cross were afraid that the Germans would claim the organ once again. They moved the urn to Milanowek, outside Warsaw, to hide it. On October 17, 1945, Chopin's heart was returned to Holy Cross. The burial was a patriotic spectacle. Crowds gathered to fly white and red flags and throw flowers in the path of the vehicle carrying the relic.

The heart rested for the next several decades, untouched but still a source of pride for the Polish people. In 2014, a team of scientists, historians, and clergy removed the heart to examine it to determine whether the cause of death was tuberculosis or, as some suspect, cystic fibrosis. The jar was resealed with hot wax and re-interred, not to be disturbed for another fifty years. The ultimate result was that it is still believed that Chopin died of tuberculosis complicated by other lung diseases. Any further testing will be up to a new generation of Poles. In the mean time, the pianist's heart can finally rest peacefully in his native land.

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Frightening Fenrir That Killed God Odin And Delivered Chaos And Destruction In Ragnarok's Final Battle | MessageToEagle.com



MessageToEagle.com

Frightening Fenrir That Killed God Odin And Delivered Chaos And Destruction In Ragnarok's Final Battle

June 06, 2016

Fenrir was a gigantic monter-wolf; he was so huge that his jaw stretched from the earth to the sky. He was considered the wildest expression of nature.



"Odin and Fenriswolf, Freyr and Surt" (1905) by Emil Doepler via wikipedia

Fenrir ("He Who Dwells in the Marshes") is the most infamous of all creatures in Norse mythology. It is one of the most dangerous creatures known from many ancient sources such as Völuspá (Old Norse Voluspá), the first and best known poem of the 'Poetic Edda', compiled from earlier traditional sources, in the 13th century. It is also known from and the 'Prose Edda' and 'Heimskringla' (the most famous of the Old Norse kings' sagas) dated to the 13th century.

Known to kill gods and goddesses, Fenrir played a significant role in the pre-Christian Scandinavian beliefs and was frequently depicted on numerous surviving runestones in Scandinavia, and described in Old Norse literary sources.



Fenrir was a gigantic monter-wolf; he was so huge that his jaw stretched from the earth to

According to the gods' prophecy, Fenrir, the son of the god Loki and his mistress and giantess, Angrboða, will kill the god Odin during the events of **Ragnarok**, but in turn, he will also be killed by Odin's son Víðarr.

One of the most popular Norse myths tells about the binding of this dangerous creature.

The dwarves forged a chain made from the world's most secret powers and the gods bound Fenrir in an attempt to control nature's never-ending destructiveness, but in vain.

The gods had tamed nature but only for a short period of time, and nature again showed its dangerous and totally uncontrolled power.

the sky. He was considered the wildest expression of nature. ("Odin and Fenrir" by Dorothy Hardy (1909))



Ledberg Stone – Ledbergsstenen) – located in Östergötland, Sweden probably depicts god Odin being devoured by the wolf Fenrir at Ragnarök, the final battle in Norse mythology, in which several gods meet their death.

Fenrir managed to break free through his binding chains; he did it with great force and started spreading death and destruction. It happens in **Ragnarok**, the great and final battle.

Subterranean forces (earthquakes) set Fenrir free and he opens his mouth so wide that his upper jaw captures heaven and his lower jaw the Earth. Fenrir's destructive, unlimited and uncontrolled power destroys lives in all the nine worlds.

Odin dies fighting Fenrir, but the gods' prophecy is also finally fulfilled. Víðarr, the son of Odin avenges his father's death killing the monster Fenrir at Ragnarok.

Expand for references

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India offers Ganges holy water by post - BBC News

bbc.com

BBC By News from Elsewhere... ...as found by BBC Monitoring

- 13 July 2016

India's national postal service is to deliver holy water from the River Ganges through the mail.

The water, known as Gangajal, will be bottled at two spots along the river - its source at Gangotri and the popular pilgrim town of Rishikesh - and sold in all post offices across the country, the Zee News website reports. Customers can also choose to have it delivered straight to their front doors. Government-run India Post says people can place orders for the water online. Those who opt for bottles from Rishikesh will pay 15 rupees ($0.22; 17p) for 200ml, while Gangotri's water is on sale at 25 rupees for the same size.

The river is sacred to Hindus who worship it as "Mother Ganges", but it has also become badly polluted with industrial waste, sewage and dead bodies. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has promised a huge clean-up operation, but India's environment watchdog said in January that little had changed so far.

Small businesses operating close to the river point out they've been bottling and selling its water locally for years, but admit that the post office's plan is enormous by comparison. Businessman Subrata Khan says that initially his company filtered the water to make it "crystal clear", but that led to a dip in sales. "We understood that people were failing to relate with clean Gangajal," he tells The Times of India website. "So we stopped filtering it and it worked wonders."

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Gay marriage in the year 100 AD

Annalee Newitz

gizmodo.com

http://io9.gizmodo.com/gay-marriage-in-the-year-100-ad-951140108

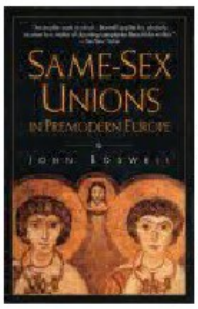


Gay marriage sounds like an ultra-contemporary idea. But almost twenty years ago, a Catholic scholar at Yale shocked the world by publishing a book packed with evidence that same-sex marriages were sanctioned by the early Christian Church during an era commonly called the Dark Ages.

Illustration of Serge and Bacchus, in a same-sex union

John Boswell was a historian and religious Catholic who dedicated much of his scholarly life to studying the late Roman Empire and early Christian Church. Poring over legal and church documents from this era, he discovered something incredible. There were dozens of records of church ceremonies where two men were joined in unions that used the same rituals as heterosexual marriages. (He found almost no records of lesbian unions, which is probably an artifact of a culture which kept more records about the lives of men generally.)

Bolstered by this evidence, Boswell published a book in 1994, the year before his death from AIDS, called *Same-Sex Unions in Pre-Modern Europe*. The book comes out next month for the first time in a digital edition. It was an instant lightening rod for controversy, drawing criticism from both the Catholic Church and sex pundit Camille Paglia. Given the Church's present-day views on gay marriage, these detractors argued, Boswell's history seemed like wishful thinking.



But it wasn't. Boswell had actually begun his research back in the 1970s, and published an equally controversial work in 1980 called *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality: Gay People in Western Europe from the Beginning of the Christian Era to the Fourteenth Century*. His *Same-Sex Unions* book refined and expanded a lot of what he'd learned over a lifetime of research into primary sources in scattered libraries and archives.

Pictured: Boswell in 1980

How could these marriages have been forgotten by history? One easy answer is that — as Boswell argues — the Church reframed the idea of marriage in the 13th century to be for the purposes of procreation. And this slammed the door on gay marriage. Church scholars and officials worked hard to suppress the history of these marriages in order to justify their new definition.

Of course, history is more complicated than that. Boswell claims that part of the problem is that we define marriage so differently today that it's almost impossible for historians to recognize 1800-year-old gay marriage documents when they see them. Often, these documents refer to uniting "brothers," which at the time would have been a way of describing same-sex partners whose lifestyles were tolerated in Rome. Also, marriages over a millennium ago were not based on procreation, but wealth-sharing. So "marriage" sometimes meant a non-sexual union of two people's or families' wealth. Boswell admits that some of the documents he found may refer simply to non-sexual joining of two men's fortunes — but many also referred to what today we would call gay marriage.

Legal scholar Richard Ante wrote a law journal article explaining that Boswell's book could even be used as evidence for the legality of gay marriage, since it shows evidence that definitions of marriage have changed over time. He describes some of Boswell's evidence of these same-sex rites in the early first millennium:

> The burial rite given for Achilles and Patroclus, both men, was the burial rite for a man and his wife.

> The relationships of Hadrian and Antinous, of Polyeuct and Nearchos, of Perpetua and Felicitas, and of Saints Serge and Bacchus, all bore resemblance to heterosexual marriages of their times. The iconography of Serge and Bacchus was even used in same-sex nuptial ceremonies by the early Christian Church.

The main piece of evidence that these same-sex unions were marriages is that they so closely resembled heterosexual ceremonies. Literary scholar Bruce Holsinger describes Boswell's detailed stories of same-sex ceremonies:

> [Boswell] cleverly posits the development of heterosexual and same-sex nuptial offices as a single phenomenon, tracking the growth of the latter from "merely a set of prayers " in the earlier Middle Ages to its flowering as a "full office" by the twelfth century that involved "the burning of candles, the placing of the two parties' hands on the Gospel, the joining of their right hands, the binding of their hands . . . with the priest's stole, an introductory litany crowning, the Lord's Prayer, Communion, a kiss, and sometimes circling around the altar." Boswell devotes a full chapter to comparing these rituals with their heterosexual counterparts, revealing a number of extraordinary similarities between the two; in several appendixes totaling almost 100 pages, he has compiled numerous examples of the documents themselves (including heterosexual matrimony ceremonies and adoption rituals for comparison) to let "readers . . . judge for themselves," as he puts it. (Boswell translates most of the ceremonies, so general readers won't have to worry about brushing up on their Old Church Slavonic.)

Were these same-sex unions in the middle ages the same thing as today's gay marriages? Probably not. People at the time may not have viewed two men forming a union as anything out of the ordinary. Marriage itself meant something different thousands of years ago, and social taboos against homosexuality had not yet solidified. Still, in Boswell's work, we find records of institutions where same-sex couples were honored with the same ceremonies that opposite-sex couples enjoyed. Two men could live as "brothers," sharing wealth, home, and family. And yes, they could love each other, too.

Though Boswell died before his country began to allow similar kinds of unions, he could draw hope from knowing something that most people did not. Even the most fundamental kinds of human relationships change over time. Those who have been banished today may be blessed tomorrow — just as they were over a thousand years ago.

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500-year-old German artwork bought at flea market

05/08

thelocal.de

The Local



500-year-old German artwork bought at flea market

AFP · 6 Aug 2016, 11:40

Published: 06 Aug 2016 11:40 GMT+02:00

Long-dead German artist Albrecht Dürer is causing a stir after a collector donated a lost work, bought for a few euros on a French flea market, to a Stuttgart museum.

The bronze engraving titled "Mary crowned by an angel" dates back to the year 1520, Anette Frankenberger of the Staatsgalerie art museum told AFP on Friday, and is in "very good condition".

A retired French archaeologist noticed the work on a bric-a-brac stand in Sarrebourg in eastern France, after the seller cleared it out of a house in the town.

Alerted by his keen eye, he quickly bought the piece -- only to find the stamp of the Staatsgalerie on its back and decide to donate it anonymously.

The man came "personally with his wife" to return the engraving, which had been missing since the end of World War II, Frankenberger said.

The museum spokeswoman added that the piece had likely been wrapped in paper for some of the intervening decades, keeping it in good condition.

It was owned by a former deputy mayor of Sarrebourg before ending up at the second-hand stall, she said.

The museum has not yet decided how to put the engraving on display.

"We have to find the right setting to present it in," Frankenberger said.

Dürer was born in 1471 in the southern German city of Nuremberg and travelled through Italy, becoming one of the first artists to introduce the Renaissance in Germany and northern Europe.

The Local Europe GmbH
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10435 Berlin
Germany

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Ghost of missing hiker? Man's blood ran cold when he took snap and saw THIS looking back

express.co.uk

SUNDAY EXPRESS

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Ghost of missing hiker? Man's blood ran cold when he took snap and saw THIS looking back

HIKERS rambling through a beauty spot may have uncovered a sinister secret after realising what was lurking in the background of this creepy picture.

By Jon Austin Jon Austin
PUBLISHED:07:43, Fri, Jun 10, 2016 | UPDATED: 08:05, Fri, Jun 10, 2016



SLICEDUPBEEF•REDDIT

No one saw this creepy figure until the pictures were later reviewed.

The ramblers didn't notice anything terrifying during their trek. But chills ran down their spines when they saw the eerie figure watching them from a far in the background of a photograph taken at the scene.

To make matters stranger, the mysterious figure was apparently standing in an area that was "completely inaccessible" to humans.

Reddit user SlicedUpBeef uploaded the chilling snap to the social media site to ask the internet to help figure out who – or what – the bone-chilling figure could be.

The man, whose real name has not been released, said he'd gone to Dundas Peak, in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, with a friend on his cousin's recommendation.

SlicedUpBeef posted on Reddit: "Way below the edge of the trail, where the slope is too steep to stand on, there appears to be a thin person standing unnaturally straight with no visible face.

> I know you're probably thinking that is just a brave hiker, but trust me, that spot is completely inaccessible. Maybe it isn't a person? But I'm not sure what else it can be.
>
> SlicedUpBeef on Reddit

"I know you're probably thinking that is just a brave hiker, but trust me, that spot is completely inaccessible. Maybe it isn't a person? But I'm not sure what else it can be."

Other site visitors soon chimed in with suggestions, with one pointing out that people tend to go missing from that area at the rate of one a year.

Another suggested they have the police check if there was a suicide at the site, which the hikers

had accidentally revealed.

One person even suggested it might have been them, saying they were wearing a grey shirt and dark jeans and were visiting the park at the time.

Some said that the area actually was accessible and it was likely just another hiker, while others said people were just spotting patterns in the rock.

12 Comments
14 hours ago
Glen
One phenomenon, two phenomena.
1 day ago
Ianpeak
I think the guy sitting on the rocks might be in line for the position of ghost when you check out the way the rocks are cracked and crumbling.
2 days ago
Cherokee Raven WolfHorseChief
it is a person.
2 days ago
Chie LeongLee
鬼魂，闹鬼屋，凶宅全部小儿科.
ghostly ghost haunted me deal with itself it is simply easy
想知道我的来历，请到Google查看！打入Lee Chie Leong!
I want to know the origins , go Google view ! Scored Lee Chie Leong!
2 days ago
PaulBrowne
I didn't believe in ghosts until I got attacked by one when I owned an old cottage in Leicestershire.
2 days ago
JBJB
Photo shopped
2 days ago
Ben
No, it's just a visual illusion. It's the way the trees and marks in the rocks line up.
2 days ago
ChrisGordon
It looks like Barack Obama.
2 days ago
cynarch
If you work out what the scale must be it's too tall to be human - presumably a combination of tree trunk, rock and shadows. Unless it's a very large cigar stuck in a cleft in the rock! (see last weeks internet sensation!)
2 days ago
HarryBeaumoo
It's white salts (similar to the patch on the left) from evaporated water coming out of a hole in the cliff (the "head"), above a slot in the cliff (the "legs"). Move on.
2 days ago
Jvb
The torso is just a chalky area of rock similar to the larger area off to the left of the main photo. It

ain't no ghostly figure!!
2 days ago
MichaelTaker
What a load of crr4p. It is NOT a figure. What is wrong with these idiots? "watching them from a far", "with no visible face".

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Ghost of 'The Gipper' Roams the University of Notre Dame

mysteriousheartland.com

https://mysteriousheartland.com/2015/11/04/ghost-of-the-gipper-roams-the-university-of-notre-dame/

11/04/2015 by Michael Kleen






[Mysteriousheartland.com] The University of Notre Dame was founded in 1842 by Father Edward Sorin, a Catholic priest, and was an all-male institution until 1972. Its motto is, "*Vita Dulcedo Spes*" or "Life, Sweetness, Hope," a reference to the Marian hymn *Salve Regina*. In honor of the Virgin Mary, the university is home to the Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes. Built in 1896, is a replica of the original in Lourdes, France. Other famous religious buildings on campus include the Basilica of the Sacred Heart, a neo-gothic church built in 1888.

Notre Dame is famous for its football team, the Fighting Irish. It was this athletic legacy that gave birth to the university's most enduring legends. In 1920, George "The Gipper" Gipp, from Laurium, Michigan, was selected as Notre Dame's first All-American football player. Unfortunately, he died of a streptococcal throat infection at the age of 25 on December 14, 1920. Ronald Reagan famously portrayed George Gipp in the 1940 film *Knute Rockne, All American*.

Students say the ghost of Gipp still haunts the modern-Gothic style Washington Hall, where he spent the night before he contracted the illness that ultimately killed him. Architect Wiloughby J. Edbrooke designed the building as a theater and music hall, and performances began there with the 1882 production of *Oedipus Tyrannus*. Ghostly occurrences began shortly after Gipp's death. In 1921, the campus newspaper reported, "Shortly before Christmas, the residents of Washington hall began to be bothered by night-time visits from a ghost who… blew a French horn with much violence. At the dead of night he would wake the hall's eight intellectuals from slumber with a prodigious blast, and when they went fearfully to investigate he would be gone."

According to the Division of Student Affairs history of Washington Hall, "While they may not all agree on the ghost's identity, few students scoff at stories of doors slamming on windless nights, footsteps heard on the roof, or inexplicable noises heard during late-night play preparations. To them, the ghost of Washington Hall is very real and very much a part of the respect for the tradition that makes Notre Dame, Notre Dame."

Poltergeist activity has also been encountered there. In addition to props falling and music playing on its own, one janitor saw an elderly, balding man who asked him to help open a window before vanishing. Others have heard unexplained music, phantom footsteps, and slamming doors. Students report being shoved on the stairway by unseen hands and seeing something unknown walking around on the roof.

According to one report, the ghosts of American Indians roam the grounds of Columba Hall, which was allegedly built on land formerly owned by the Potawatomi. This may be a distortion of a story from 1922 in which a student named Pio Montenegro reported witnessing a ghostly white horse galloping up the steps of Washington Hall. Whatever the origin of that particular tale, there is no doubt that the history and beauty of the University of Notre Dame has inspired many legends.

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WATCH: 'Ghost plague doctor' captured on camera stalking streets express.co.uk

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Home of the Daily and Sunday Express
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WATCH: 'Ghost plague doctor' captured on camera stalking streets

A MYSTERY figure wearing a creepy medieval plague doctor costume was captured on camera - with the footage going viral online as anxious social media users trying to explain the figure.

By Jon Austin
PUBLISHED: 15:02, Fri, Jun 24, 2016 | UPDATED: 16:11, Fri, Jun 24, 2016

The being, in a long black hooded cloak with a beaked mask, shoulder bag and white stick, has been taunting people in historic Chester.

The mystery person wash spotted several times by spooked residents, usually at night.

This footage is the first time they were captured on camera, with the film apparently taken at daylight on a section of the Chester's Roman walls, by the River Dee.

In the short clip, entitled 'The Chester ChronicleCreepy plague man vid' the person surveys the river, then heads off in the opposite direction.

Plague doctors wore beaked masks full of herbs and spices and used sticks to avoid contact with infected patients in the cities they worked in.



YouTube

The creepy plague doctor in a still from the video.

Scary: Plague doctor looks straight at the camera.

Antonio Chester, a well known local Twitter account, released the footage after claiming to have received it anonymously.

Initially, no one was able to unmask the plague doctor, or discover if a team of people were behind the creepy stunt.

But those behind it have set up their own Facebook account to taunt locals, with postings such as "Where shall I roam tonight?" and "I wonder how many of you will find me".

Natasha Beach tweeted: "So in my home town there's a guy roaming the streets at night dressed as a plague doctor and freaking people out."

Twitter user @its_hayleyx wrote: "So the fact someone is lurking around Chester dressed as a plague doctor is making me want to never leave the house because they terrify me."

Weird: The plague doctor then turns away to walk off.



YouTube



YouTube

So in my home town there's a guy roaming the streets at night dressed as a plague doctor and freaking people out.

Natasha Beach

But it was later revealed the stunt was a marketing ploy for a new gore-themed history of medicine visitor attraction opening on the City walls this summer.

Chester-based social enterprise Big Heritage finally owned up to being behind the trick after the story hit the national headlines.

Company managing director Dean Paton said: "It will be a visitor attraction that pushes boundaries, educates, entertains and occasionally induces vomiting.

“That’s Big Heritage in a nutshell.

“The plague doctor plays a big part in this story, so we thought we would bring him to life."

Last October, a creepy video emerged showing a person in a plague doctor outfit who was revealing a series of cryptic clues.

But there was no link to the Chester footage.

The mystery mirrored the case of a creepy clown who perplexed locals in Northampton in 2013.

Pictures of the clown, based on Stephen King's clown from the book and film It, in several locations emerged online.

He was later unmasked as local film maker Alex Powell.

2 Comments
3 days ago
fredbrackely.
Ghosts that cast shadows mmmmm...
8 days ago
pi_gal
oh, for heaven's sake. trying to figure out it's a guy in a monk getup? really?

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Ghostly image captured in fatal accident pic

By Doug Criss , CNN Updated 10:08 AM ET, Thu July 14, 2016
2016-07-14T13:47:09Z

cnn.com



Ghostly spirit or an optical illusion? Saul Vazquez will only say that this photo has not been altered.

- Saul Vazquez said his father snapped the photo
- It appears to show the outline of a figure hovering

(CNN)When people encounter tragedies, either in their own lives or the lives of others, they often try to make sense of it all.

Many people think a Kentucky man captured a supernatural moment when he took a picture of a fatal motorcycle crash earlier this week.
Saul Vazquez said his father snapped the accident scene as he passed by it Tuesday afternoon from the cab of his truck.
The photo appears to show the faint outline of a figure hovering over the accident scene. The man involved in the motorcycle crash later died at the hospital.
He posted the pic on Facebook a few minutes later, and many commenters said the photo captures the dead man's spirit leaving his body.
Vazquez didn't immediately respond to CNN's request for comment but told CNN affiliate WLEX the photo wasn't altered.
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CNN Sans ™ & © 2016 Cable News Network.

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Ghostly object hiding in this historic picture may send a shiver down your spine

22:47, 27 Jun 2016 Updated 22:49, 27 Jun 2016 By Mark McCreary-IM

mirror.co.uk



Can you spot the strange sight in this picture?

Here's a supernatural mystery which may just send a shiver down your spine.

Taken in 1900, it shows a group of linen mill girls in Belfast posing for a photo in their work clothes.

At first glance all appears normal, each woman looks towards the camera with a cord around her waist holding the tools they used every day.

But look closer – and you might spot that a young lady on the far right in the dark shirt has an extra – very creepy – “accessory” which she’s unaware of.

Belfast Live reports it was directed towards the ghostly anomaly by a reader who has a direct link to the original picture.

She said: “Great to see an old photo of my Granny, in the by-gone years photo, when she worked at the mill.

"She was Ellen Donnelly (nee McKillop) and she is fourth on the right in the second row down [of the main picture, below].

“My dad has this photo at home… a family ghost picture!!

"I don't really believe in ghosts – but there have been a few odd going-ons around this photo, so I hope this doesn't cause any more!"

If you haven’t spotted it yet, Lynda’s next comment will REVEAL all.

“But did anyone spot the mysterious hand on the girl on the right’s shoulder?” she asked.

We’ve circled the “creepy claw” in the close-up below…

A reader spotted the 'creepy claw' in the 116-year-old picture

What makes this picture so chilling is the fact it was taken more than 100 years ago.

We’ve tried to explain it as a trick of the light, or maybe as a ruffle on the girl’s shirt – but neither quite add up.

Also, we're hoping to hear more from Lynda about the history of her grim family photo which may – or may not – shed a bit more light on the mystery.



A reader spotted the 'creepy claw' in the 116-year-old picture

So after you get over the shock, of course, we'd love to hear your theories about the dismembered hand giving the unsuspecting mill girl a little squeeze.

Feel free to get in touch on Facebook or via our comment section below.

Just one thing – take a quick look to your right in case there's something unusual creeping along your shoulder…

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Chillingham Castle – The Ghosts of Motley Hall

wordpress.com

https://hauntedpalaceblog.wordpress.com/2015/12/27/chillingham-castle-the-ghosts-of-motley-hall/

The Haunted Palace

Chillingham Castle – The Ghosts of Motley Hall

27*Sunday*Dec 2015

Posted by Lenora

Tags

Blue boy, border castles, Chillingham Castle, English castles, Ghost Tours, Grey Tomb, haunted castles, John Sage, Lady Mary Berkeley, Northumberland, Orbs, paranormal investigation, seance, St Peters parish church, vigils

A border stronghold with a bloody history



View of the Cheviots from Chillingham Castle. Image believed to be Edward I. Source Wikimedia. The Courtyard of Chillingham Castle. The Grey Tomb, St Peters Parish Church. Eccentric decor abounds in Sir Humphrey's Castle. The Ghosts of Motley Hall. ITV 1976-1978. Detail from the Grey Tomb. Adapted from an image of WWI officer. The Blue Boy. Adapted from the Gainsborough painting. Image purports to be of Lady Mary Berkeley. Public domain(?) The White Lady from The Ghosts of Motley Hall. ITV 1976-1978. The Iron Maiden. The Dungeon at Chillingham Castle It is said that the dismembered bodies of witches once festooned this tree. It is said that this is a portrait of a witch who both curses and protects Chillingham Castle. Chillingham Castle by full moon. The 'orbs' here are caused by the moon's reflection. Along the Devils Walk, something in the mid/top left? Along the Devils Walk, again, a noticeable 'orb' this time on the right. Several less distinct 'orbs' on the right. In the woods, just past the hanging tree. Possibly something by the tree trunk on the right, and along the path? In the chapel, not easy to see but several indistinct 'orbs' in the top left hand corner of the roof. 'Control' photo – taken on the same night at the YHA, 6 miles away. Possibly an indistinct 'orb/insect? 'Control' photo taken during heavy fog, showing the effect of a flash on moisture in the air.

In North Northumberland, within sight of the Cheviot Hills, lies the medieval stronghold of Chillingham Castle. Tucked away on the outskirts of the village of the same name, it is remote and forbidding in aspect. Wild cattle still live in these parts, descendants of the beasts that once roamed the ancient forests of Britain. This was once a lawless land, subject to violent cross border raids during the constant bloody warfare between England and Scotland. It seems peaceful now, but that peace may be deceptive.



View of the Cheviots from Chillingham Castle.



Image believed to be Edward I. Source Wikimedia.

A brief history of Chillingham Castle

Originally a monastery, its strategic location meant that by 1298 King Edward I (1238 -1307) was using the fortress as a staging post for his wars against the great Scottish military commander William Wallace. Known as Edward Longshanks for his imposing height, his brutal Scottish campaigns quickly earned him the sobriquet 'Hammer of the Scots' – although ultimately he failed to subdue his northern neighbors.

Things remained turbulent on the borders of England and Scotland and in 1344 King Edward III issued a license to Sir Thomas Grey to crenellate and further fortify the already stalwart castle, turning it into a full quadrangular edifice. The walls, in places, were 10 feet thick. Such imposing defenses were necessary – in 1537 the castle was besieged again, this time not by the Scots but by another powerful Northern family, the Percy's, during the ill-fated Pilgrimage of Grace.

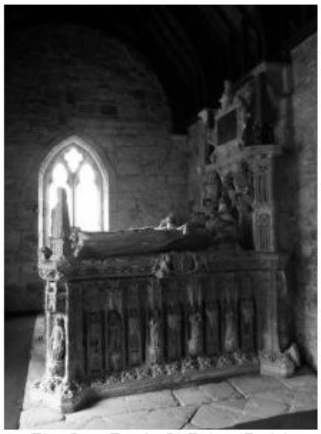
In 1603 James VI of Scotland became James I of England (Edward Longshanks must have been spinning in his grave). His reign heralded a more peaceful co-existence between the two warring nations and as the seventeenth



The Courtyard of Chillingham Castle.

century progressed warfare and border rieving began to wane. In 1617 King James even stayed at Chillingham on one of his trips between his two kingdoms. In a more peaceful age there was little need for the bleak fortifications of an earlier era, the moat was filled and famous architect Inigo Jones redesigned the North and South fronts. Long galleries, a banqueting hall and a library were added for less martial pursuits. By the eighteenth and nineteenth century the castle was a romantic relic – with gardens landscaped by Capability Brown and Sir Jeffrey Wyatville. Sir Walter Scott found inspiration in the castle (and its wild cattle) in his 1819 novel 'The Bride of Lammermoor'.

The fall and rise of Chillingham Castle



The Grey Tomb, St Peters Parish Church.

The Grey and Bennet families had lived in the castle from the 15th century – the magnificent Grey Tomb in the nearly St Peter's Parish Church testifies to this long-standing association. However, by the twentieth century the castle, like so many other grand houses of Britain, was falling into decay.

During World War II the military was billeted at the castle and caused much structural damage. Even going so far as to strip out the ancient wood panelling. It would seem that final nail had been driven into the coffin and the Tankervilles ceased to resided in their ancient ancestral home. The castle seemed likely to go the way of many a great house after the War, if not to be demolished outright, then to linger on as a ruinous shell of a once glorious past. Until, that is Sir Humphrey Wakefield came across the castle and in 1982 and decided to purchase it. His wife could trace her ancestry back to the Grey family – nevertheless despite this family connection, apparently she had more sense than to live in the very dilapidated until a lot of work had been done to improve it!



Eccentric decor abounds in Sir Humphrey's Castle.

Since then the indomitable Sir Humphrey has set about restoring the castle (and stamping his own idiosyncratic style upon it – more a glorious homage to the Ghosts of Motley Hall than National Trust wannabe – and all the better for it!) and it is now open to the public, it is even possible to stay in apartments in the castle. These days one of Chillingham's primary claims to fame, is that is it purported to be one of the most haunted castles in Britain and consequently prospective ghost hunters can take part in highly entertaining ghost tours and more in-depth all night vigils.



Famous and infamous ghosts of Chillingham Castle

Leonora, Countess of Tankerville, had always felt a connection with the spirit world. Even before she had ever visited Chillingham Castle she received a precognition that one day she would be its

The Ghosts of Motley Hall. ITV 1976-1978.



Detail from the Grey Tomb.

lady. One morning, whilst staying in France, she dreamed that she was walking up to the castle when a young man approached her saying 'I have come to walk with you until my brother George is ready.' Soon George (a recent acquaintance) arrived and the young man disappeared. Leonora went on to marry George, Earl of Tankerville. Later she was able to identify the young man in her dream from a photograph – he was her husband's brother and he had died two years previously in Afghanistan.



Adapted from an image of WWI officer.

Leonora went on to have several strange experiences during her time living in the castle. From highly personal encounters, such as when she had a vision of an officer friend only to discover that he had died many miles away, at the very moment he appeared to her; and the dramatically historic, such as when she witnessed a tense Tudor tableau taking place before her eyes. She recorded her experiences in a pamphlet published in 1925, which can be read on the Chillingham Castle Website.

Leonora believed that we all had the capability to tap into the spirit world, but that to do so an individual needed to cultivate understanding of those sense and discipline. Over the years she is not the only person to have had a close encounter with the supernatural at Chillingham castle.

The Blue Boy/The Radiant Boy



The Blue Boy. Adapted from the Gainsborough painting.

The radiant boy is a phantom that was reputed to haunt the pink bedroom. His pitiful cries could be heard at the stroke of midnight, and he would appear as an orb or halo of blue light, often close to a passage leading to a tower. The glowing figure was then supposed to manifest itself as a little boy dressed in blue. This apparition has been linked to the bones of a child found walled up in the castle. It was during renovation work in the early 20th century this grisly discovery was made. Remnants of mouldering blue fabric were discovered along with the skeleton. After the bones were reburied with due ceremony, the phenomenon appeared to cease. However, recent visitors have claimed to have observed a blue orb in the pink room…

Lady Mary Berkeley



Image purports to be of Lady Mary Berkeley. Public domain(?)

Another famous ghost is that of the tragic Lady Mary Berkeley (died 1719). She was the wife of Lord Grey of Wark and Chillingham (1655-1701). She was abandoned by her faithless husband who ran off with her sister, Henrietta, causing quite a scandal (an account of which is provided in the sources section below). The heart-broken Lady Mary was left with her baby, wandering the halls of the castle, longing for the return of her errant husband. He never returned – and she, apparently never left. Even today visitors to the castle have reported the rustle of silk accompanied by an unearthly chill, which has been interpreted as indication Lady Mary has passed by on her sad vigil. She is said to be buried just beyond the castle in the tiny medieval church of St Peter's in the village of Chillingham.

The White Lady in the pantry

A thirsty ghost once importuned a footman guarding the family silver, in the white pantry. The unfortunate man was accosted by a wispy lady in white, begging for a drink of water. As he turned to obey her wishes, he suddenly recalled that the pantry was locked (to protect the silver) and that it should have been impossible for anyone to gain entry….on turning back to her, he found she had vanished. It has been suggested that the lady could have been the victim of poisoning…hence her search for water.



The White Lady from The Ghosts of Motley Hall. ITV 1976-1978.

John Sage/John Dragfoot



The Iron Maiden.

One possibly modern addition to the ghostly pantheon of Chillingham is one John Sage, also known as John Dragfoot. A prominent figure in the ever popular ghost tours, he is purported to be a sadistic ex-soldier turned torturer from the days of King Edward I. The tale of John Sage is very detailed and very bloody – replete with devious and cruel tortures, kinky sex and eventual retribution. However the jury remains out as to whether he is a recent invention for the benefit of the tourists or whether he is based on any real person. It would be interesting to find out if there is any mention of this person in the historical record or local lore.

The castle does indeed have a wonderfully well stocked dungeon – and the addition of a demoniacal evil torturer certainly creates a vivid picture of the horrors such devices could inflict on human flesh. However, I seem to recall reading somewhere (although cannot locate the source) that the devices in the dungeon are not originally from the castle and the chambers were not actually used as dungeons (I may be wrong, but perhaps someone has further information on this…?)

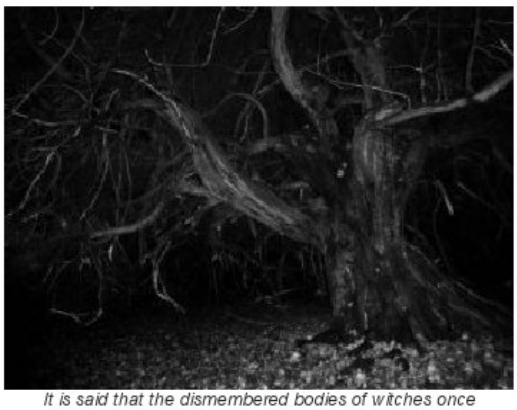
Many other phenomena have been reported at the castle: disembodied voices in the chapel, phantom monks on the Devil's Walk and malevolent presences lurking in dark chambers…whatever your view of the supernatural, Chillingham Castle certainly has an extensive history of strange phenomena contained within its blood soaked ramparts.



The Dungeon at Chillingham Castle

Chillingham Castle Ghost Tour

On Halloween, Bonnie and I took a late night trip to Chillingham Castle for the famous ghost tour. We were lucky enough to get Graham Burney as our Paranormal Investigator, (Graham is the founder and Lead Investigator of the Chillingham Paranormal Team and Head Ghost Guide), he and his associate gave a fabulously creepy and eventful Halloween tour. A balance of gory history and paranormal investigation – it was not for the faint hearted! (No, really, I mean it: people were coming over all peculiar and having to leave because they were so spooked by all the things that were going on!)



It is said that the dismembered bodies of witches once festooned this tree.

Our tour began outside the castle, we processed along the Devils Walk and Graham regaled us with dark tales of monks and witches hanged and dismembered in trees. Walking amidst the dark boughs of trees it was easy to believe that spirits and orbs lurked in the arboreal depths of night.

The tour took in the dungeons, with a vivid account of how many of the torture devices were employed, and the character of John Sage was introduced in all his bloody in-glory. Throughout the tour, which included the Edward I chamber, the banqueting hall and Chapel, Graham led the group through various paranormal experiments and seances with varying results. From dark shadows, whispering voices, eerie whistling, growling ghosts to violent



It is said that this is a portrait of a witch who both curses and protects Chillingham Castle.

crashing noises. Even a drunken ghost that took a rather shine to Bonnie and after growling in her ear used his spectral powers to make her derriere go icy cold…from the sublime to the ridiculous (???) – we had them all.

By the end of the tour, there had been scares aplenty and a lot of laughter. Whether you believe that a ghost tour on Halloween night, in a wonderfully creepy old castle, is pure entertainment – or may in fact hold the key to more esoteric things, is of course entirely up to you. However, skeptic or believer, the Chillingham Castle ghost tour is well worth experiencing and I will definitely be going back for the all night vigil at some point in the new year! (Details of how to book on the Chillingham Castle ghost tours and vigils can be found via the links below).

The truth about orbs…..?

During the whole event I took multiple photos – then some 'control' photo's back where we were staying (and later in my garden at home). The photo's showed what some may consider to be orbs. However, as Graham and his colleague on the tour explained, orbs can usually be viewed with the naked eye as well and I can confirm that I didn't see any orbs without the aid of the camera. (Well, to be fair I was staring at the viewfinder a lot of the time!)

There is much skepticism about the nature and cause of orb images – are they dust, insects, reflections of moisture in the air? It has also been noted that they are more likely to appear on digital than film photographs, and recently debunked photographs have highlighted some of the idiosyncracies of modern I-phone photographic technology (see the link to The Independent article, in the sources below).

- For all of the photo's below I used the flash (if I had thought better of it, I would have tried some without).
- It was quite a mild night for October, with some moisture in the air.
- There were definitely some insects flying about.
- It is likely that inside the castle there could have been dust.
- I did not observe any orbs without the use of the camera.

On the other hand, I take a lot of photo's, and I have never had any orb-like images quite like this appear before….

I leave you to draw your own conclusions…



Chillingham Castle by full moon. The 'orbs' here are caused by the moon's reflection.



Along the Devils Walk, something in the mid/top left?

images

All Image by Lenora, unless otherwise attributed.

Sources

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Along the Devils Walk, again, a noticeable 'orb' this time on the right.



Several less distinct 'orbs' on the right.



In the woods, just past the hanging tree. Possibly something by the tree trunk on the right, and along the path?



In the chapel, not easy to see but several indistinct 'orbs' in the top left hand corner of the roof.



'Control' photo – taken on the same night at the YHA, 6 miles away. Possibly an indistinct 'orb'/insect?



'Control' photo taken during heavy fog, showing the effect of a flash on moisture in the air.

http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/gadgets-and-tech/news/ghost-of-the-grey-lady-at-hampton-court-how-image-aliasing-allows-iphone-cameras-to-photograph-10069536.html [How image aliasing debunked the Grey Lady of Hampton Court]

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3 thoughts on "Chillingham Castle – The Ghosts of Motley Hall"

1.

Miss_Jessel *said:*

December 28, 2015 at 9:35 am

A fascinating post, I really enjoyed reading it but I am so glad I was not with you that evening! I must visit Chillingham next time I am up that way.

2.

notebookofghosts *said:*

January 10, 2016 at 12:29 pm

Glad I found your blog. So detailed and well researched. Makes this academic very excited. This ghost tour looks so interesting. Thank you for snapping pictures and sharing them.

-

Lenora *said:*

January 10, 2016 at 4:49 pm

Thank you, I'm glad you enjoyed the post. Chillingham Castle is an extraordinary place – and the ghost tour is definitely worth it!

Create a free website or blog at WordPress.com. The Chateau Theme .

Giant inflatable duck missing from New Jersey town

upi.com

By Daniel Uria | July 22, 2016 at 2:39 PM
Follow @oddnewsupi

CLINTON, N.J., July 22 (UPI) -- Crime stoppers in a New Jersey town are seeking the return of a giant inflatable duck, which went missing from a local pond.

The Town of Clinton shared a photo of a poster of the 5-foot 4-inch tall duck, which was last seen on Sunday during the town's annual rubber duck race.

"To the person or persons who are responsible, it might be best to get ducky back to where he belongs," they wrote.

According to NJ.com, the Hunterdon County Crime Stoppers are offering a $250 reward for the duck's return.

Clinton Guild President Diane Crisman-Race said were able to pin down a timeframe when it may have gone missing.

"We've pinned it down to after 10 p.m. and before 8:20 a.m. Monday," she said. "Sometime during that time period the duck went missing."

Crisman-Race maintained that the duck was likely stolen, as they were able to determine that the duck did not float away or sink to the bottom of the pond.

"We went to the top of the art museum and looked into the river," she said. "The water's clear enough to see through, and it's not there."

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Man in go kart flees police pursuit on California highway

upi.com

http://www.upi.com/Odd_News/2016/06/29/Man-in-go-kart-flees-police-pursuit-on-California-highway/3031467213239/

By Ben Hooper | June 29, 2016 at 11:34 AM



A man in a go kart flees from a police vehicle with its emergency lights on. Screenshot: Storyful

OAKLAND, Calif., June 29 (UPI) -- A go kart driver was filmed by a witness fleeing from a police vehicle on a stretch of highway in California.

The video, which was captured by a Snapchat user and uploaded to Twitter by user @Tonka_Boy_Dre, shows a man in a go kart speeding away from an unmarked police vehicle with its red and blue lights flashing.

A crowd of onlookers cheers the man on as he speeds down the highway without stopping.

It was unclear whether the man was eventually stopped by police or if he got away.

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Nemesis: Winged Goddess Of Justice And Revenge | MessageToEagle.com

messagetoeagle.com



MessageToEagle.com

June 02, 2016

The word *Nemesis* originally meant the distributor of fortune, neither good nor bad, simply in due proportion to each according to what was deserved.

In Greek mythology, Nemesis was a winged goddess of justice and revenge. Often called "Goddess of Rhamnous", an isolated place in Attica, Nemesis was remorseless and her name means "to give what is due. She was also known as Adrasteia, meaning "the inescapable"

Who Was The Goddess Nemesis?

Nemesis has been described as the daughter of Zeus, but, according to Hesiod, she was a child of Erebus and Nyx. She has also been considered the daughter of Nyx alone.

Her cult may have originated at Smyrna, an ancient Greek city located at a central and strategic point on the Aegean coast of Anatolia.

A festival called Nemeseia was held at Athens. Its object was to avert the vengeance of the dead, who were supposed to have the power of punishing the living, if their cult had been in any way neglected. This evolved into a festival giving homage to Adrasteia/Nemesis. Sacrifices were made to her in the hopes of avoiding her gaze and judgment, or in an attempt to invoke her aid for a perceived slight. In Rome she was considered the patron Goddess of Gladiators & the Arena, and sacrifices were offered before every bout.

Nemesis is usually seen holding a sword, but in some images she can be seen holding balance, scales or measuring rod. She has enormous wings and travels in a chariot drawn by Griffins, which were beasts with the head and wings of an eagle and the body of a lion.

In the classic Greek tragedies, Nemesis appears chiefly as the avenger of crime and the punisher of hubris (arrogance before the gods).

How Nemesis Punished Narcissus

One Greek myth tells the story of how Nemesis punished, Narcissus, a hunter in Greek mythology, and son of the river god Cephissus and the nymph Liriope. Narcissus was a very beautiful young man who was also very arrogant and disdained those who loved him. One day, while he was hunting in the woods, the Oread nymph Echo spotted him and immediately fell for him.

When Narcissus sensed that someone was following him, Echo eventually revealed herself and tried to hug him. However, he pushed her off and told her not to disturb him. Echo, in despair, roamed around the woods for the rest of her life, and wilted away until all it remained of her was an echo sound.



Justice & Divine Vengeance Pursuing Crime, by Pierre Paul Prud'hon (1759-1823), French Neoclassical painter



Nemesis, the goddess of retribution and revenge, learned what had happened and decided to punish Narcissus for his behavior. Nemesis led him to a pool, where he saw his reflection and fell in love with it. Unable to abandon his reflection, he died there.

Nemesis believed that no one should ever have too much good, and she had always cursed those who were blessed with countless gifts.

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'Godzilla' attempts -- and fails -- penalty kick at Japanese soccer game

upi.com

By Ben Hooper | July 27, 2016 at 11:32 AM
Follow @oddnewsupi



Godzilla might be able to level a city, but he can't kick a penalty shot. Screenshot: @singaporestevem/Twitter

KAWASAKI, Japan, July 27 (UPI) -- Movie monster Godzilla put in a bizarre performance at a Japanese soccer game, attempting -- and failing -- to make a penalty shot using its tail.

Godzilla, or more accurately an actor wearing a Godzilla costume, made an appearance on the pitch ahead of a J-league match between Kawasaki Frontale and FC Tokyo to promote the July 29 release of new film *Godzilla: Resurgence*.

Advertisement

The movie monster attempted to swat the ball toward the goal, tended by Kawasaki's mascot, with his tail by spinning his body, but missed the ball completely.

Japanese actor Hiroki Hasegawa, one of the film's human stars, lent Godzilla a helping foot and kicked the ball into the goal.

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India 'gold man' battered to death - BBC News

bbc.com

http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-36804209?utm_source=fark&utm_medium=website&utm_content=link



Datta Phuge was a money lender

An Indian man who bought one of the world's most expensive shirts made entirely of gold has been allegedly battered to death, police said.

Datta Phuge shot into the global limelight in 2013 when he bought a shirt made with more than 3kg of gold and worth $250,000 (£186,943).

A money lender based in western Pune, Mr Phuge was called "the gold man".

Four persons have been detained for questioning. Police suspect a dispute over money have led to the murder.

The police said some 12 people attacked Mr Phuge, 48, in Pune on Thursday night.

One of the suspects had invited Mr Phuge and his 22-year-old son to celebrate a birthday at an open ground in Dighi area when the men attacked him with stones and a sharp weapon.

Police said the son had witnessed his father being murdered and had been spared by the alleged killers.

"However, we are investigating how Mr Phuge reached the open ground where he was murdered," Dighi police station inspector Navnath Ghogare told the Press Trust of India news agency.

Image caption Mr Phuge often wore gold all over his body

Mr Phuge often wore gold all over his body: his knuckles, neck, and wrists were weighed down by signet rings, chunky bracelets, and a medallion.

"Some people ask me why I'm wearing so much gold but it was my dream. People have different aspirations. Some elite people want to own an Audi or Mercedes, and have big cars. I chose gold," he told the BBC in 2013.

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Goldie Hawn's Ouija Board Story From The '80s Will Give You Chills

huffingtonpost.com

It made an eerily accurate prediction, she says.

07/08/2016 10:06 am ET

- Lisa Capretto OWN

We all have stories that give us goosebumps. This is Goldie Hawn's.

One evening back in the '80s, Hawn was enjoying a few glasses of wine at home with her partner, Kurt Russell. As the two were about to call it a night, something caught their eye — their children's old Ouija board.

"I said, 'We've got to throw this thing out, get rid of it, burn it. But before we do... why don't we try it?'" Hawn suggested.

Russell, a skeptic, agreed, and together with the couple's nanny/friend, they sat down to give the board a go. Hawn told the eerie story of what happened next on a 1987 episode of "The Oprah Winfrey Show."

"I was taking the letters down. Kurt was blindfolded on one end and our nanny … was on the other end, and they could not see where this thing was going," Hawn says, referring to the planchette.

She opened the Ouija session with a question: Who is with us now?

On every letter the planchette stopped, Hawn wrote it down.

N-E-W B-A-B-Y R-U-S-S-E-L-L

"I get the chills just thinking about it," she told Oprah.

At the time of that Ouija board session, Hawn had two young children — Oliver and Kate Hudson — with her ex, and she was not yet pregnant with her third child.

She asked another question: Do you know what you want to be?

H-A-P-P-Y

Hawn continued: Who is willing you in?

O-L-I-V-E-R

"I promise you," Hawn said firmly. "Not 'O, maybe L.' It was 'O-L-I-V-E-R.' Inside, I'm screaming."

While this was happening, Hawn points out that Russell and the nanny remained unaware of what the Ouija board was spelling. Suddenly, young Oliver woke from his bed.

"He comes running downstairs," Hawn said. "It was like two in the morning. 'Mommy,' he said, 'I'm scared.' He had some weird thing happen to him when he was sleeping. Nightmare."

Hawn put Oliver back to bed and returned to the Ouija board with one more question: Do you know that you're coming to me?

Y-E-S. B-Y-E B-Y-E M-O-M-M-Y.

Later, on July 10, 1986, Hawn gave birth to Wyatt Russell.

"When the baby came and everything was joyous, Oliver came and he picked the baby up and he laid down on the bed with him. He said, 'Mom, I can't believe he's here and he's mine,'" Hawn said. "It's an enormous connection."

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KDRV.com | Witnesses Say Man Lassoed Suspected Thief at Eagle Point Walmart

kdrv.com

By **Julia Moore** Jun. 10, 2016



Photos from Rebekah Neal

EAGLE POINT, Ore. -- A man on a horse chased down and lassoed a suspected thief at the Eagle Point Walmart, according to witnesses.

Police say that a woman was yelling about her bike being stolen and a nearby man unloaded a horse from a trailer, lassoed the man and pulled him back toward the store. They say that the man grabbed onto a tree and wouldn't let go.

Eagle Point Police arrived on scene and arrested the man, identified as 22-year-old Victorino Arellano-Sanchez. He was lodged in the Jackson County Jail.



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Grayson Perry's Dream House: a secular chapel to the Essex everywoman

Filipa Jodelka

Sunday 17 May 2015 Last modified on Friday 20 May 2016

theguardian.com

Grayson Perry's Dream House: a secular chapel to the Essex everywoman

'This is the flat, brown, rural and ordinary Essex, a place entirely at odds with the myth of the high-gloss what-do-you-call-an-Essex-Girl'



Grayson Perry's A House For Essex. Photograph: Grayson Perry/FAT Architecture

"What I like about this site," says Grayson Perry as he surveys a scrappy bit of land in Wrabness, north-east Essex, "is they wouldn't film Towie here." Flagrant structured-reality slander aside, the largely excellent **Grayson Perry's Dream House** follows the process of building a fully habitable and rentable house to Grayson's artistic specifications, as commissioned by Alain de Botton's Living Architecture project (but don't let that put you off).

The house is a monument to what Grayson calls "thwarted female intelligence": an "ornate, terracotta covered temple" sacred to the memory of an imagined Essex everywoman, Julie May Cope (geddit?). Julie, Grayson tells us, was born in Canvey Island in 1953, and was raised in social housing, moving upwards and outwards in more ways than one before her eventual death, run over by a pizza-delivery moped. The life Grayson has written for her moves through marriages, children, winding career paths, and the towns of Basildon, Colchester and Wrabness. "These are not names that are being listed by Unesco," says Grayson. He's not wrong. This is the flat, brown, rural and ordinary Essex, a place entirely at odds with the myth of the high-gloss what-do-you-call-an-Essex-Girl.

Local planning objections ("What next, a mini Shard?!?") suggest a rural shrine to the divine female is a totally outlandish concept. Yet for anyone who's sat in the meticulously clean lounge of a certain type of female, the notion of the domestic setting being a sacred vessel of womanhood isn't hard to wrap your mind around. The women who'll endure the 1,600% APR hire-purchase plan to satisfy their desire for a new three-piece leather suite know about the determination that Grayson seeks to monumentalise here. I feel I know Julie. I've been bollocked for interfering with her collector's-item dragon statuettes and been made to polish her media unit in penance.

In Grayson's temple, there are no collectable dragon statuettes in sight, which I suppose is why he's an artist and I'm just destined to spend my life scouring the Betterware catalogue for wind-chime bird scarers. The house, when it's revealed, is beautiful, made up of four incrementally smaller sections with a shining copper roof, and clad in a harlequin pattern of 1,924 glazed sigils of St Jules. She has a bedroom symbolising each of her marriages, with huge tapestries detailing the humorous, intricate life Grayson has conceived for her, and an entrance hall described pretty accurately as a chapel space.

Julie, in all that she encompasses, easily spans the interlocking themes of class, taste and identity that Grayson's previous top-notch documentaries untangled over several hours. Whether building a secular temple to the female is a more or less complex pursuit than this is anyone's guess. I'm not convinced, though, that an hour-long, one-off show is long enough to cover everything. On a half-constructed roof, Grayson confesses some doubts about the project I would have liked to hear more about, but which instead were elbowed out of the way by a segment on a tile factory ("Our biggest issue is Julie's nipples").

In the end, it's the six IRL Essex Julies who Grayson has selected to unveil the house to, that draw out the trickier motivations behind the project. Over a glass of wine, one Julie gently prods the question: "Does it represent, like, your mother?" This scene tells you more about sisterhood than any feminist edict ever could. The sensitive, rawer moments where fictional Julie's life intersects with Grayson's are inevitable given the honesty of his work, but what's most impressive are when the details mirror the real-life Julies, as more than one bawls her mascaraed eyes out with familiarity when the group step inside. If art is about externalising something intense and essential, clearly there are several ways to do this. You could build a towering, gleaming

tribute to womanhood. Or you could get sloshed with six no-nonsense Essex girls and a lot of Chablis in a pub in Braintree.

Sunday 17 May, 9pm, Channel 4

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comments (68)

- Wordtaster
17 May 2015 1:25

I'm speechless, but not in a nice way sorry.

- neilrgrayshon
17 May 2015 1:27

Chablis?

- Tarantella
17 May 2015 1:32

Now, if Grayson painted a house in Kensington with red and white stripes would there be an outcry? Because they are easier on the eye than this house. Love the concept and the stories though...

- Soosisan
17 May 2015 1:37

'This scene tells you more about sisterhood than any feminist edict ever could. ' Really? I'm not sure which is more irritating; the faux art or the pretentious narrative.

- Dean Bainbridge
17 May 2015 1:43

Austerity? What austerity?

- Loafervandross
17 May 2015 1:44

An oligarch's Wimpey kennel

- Tollundman
17 May 2015 1:49

Who is Grayson Perry? Why is this a story in a national newspaper? Is this piece of rubbish important, and to whom? Pretentious critics and people who think this is important. It's not.

  - aglambie Tollundman
17 May 2015 2:08

  Bragging about one's ignorance is OK, I suppose...

  - Eastbister aglambie
17 May 2015 2:13

  A tad bitchy or what.

  - Afrochic Tollundman
17 May 2015 2:19

  You sir, are a massive loser.

- StTrevorofIlford
17 May 2015 1:49

How the bleedin' hell did they get planning permission for this?

- childofmine
17 May 2015 1:51

Never understood the media fascination with him. Would anyone have taken any notice of his teapots if he wasn't dressed as a little girl?

  - Eastbister childofmine
  17 May 2015 2:12

  Truth in a nut shell.

  - AntonZ childofmine
  17 May 2015 5:20

  That would be difficult - he hasn't done any teapots.

- ubiktd Jon
17 May 2015 1:52

reminds me of the Byzantine Saint Basil's in Red Square

- RobRobbieRob
17 May 2015 1:52

> Local planning objections ("What next, a mini Shard?!?") suggest a rural shrine to the divine female is a totally outlandish concept.

Or maybe local planning objections suggest that it's a bit of a monstrosity and people aren't keen on the look of it.

- 17 May 2015 1:53

Well you know what they say- money may buy you happiness, but it can't buy you good taste.

- showmaster
17 May 2015 2:01

I just loves it.
From what little I have seen the house is not visible from any other house and is tucked away on worthless Essex land (isn't it all?). Mayhap we should organise charabanc trips for those who are determined to be offended?

Or should we just ignore them and enjoy the fun and idiosyncrasy? Well done Grayson and Essex County Council for allowing it.

- bojimbo261
17 May 2015 2:02

#graysonperry trending . Ick .

- mojoangel
17 May 2015 2:03

Enough. How many more articles? Yes Grayson Perry is a fine artist and he and Claire are on their way to being a national treasure, but it's getting to be overkill.

- Eastbister mojoangel
17 May 2015 2:18

  He is definitely not a national treasure more like a lazy critics chance to blather about a flavour of the month when there's little flashy to fill column inches with.

- Eastbister
17 May 2015 2:11

Perry is a wonderfully successful publicist of his flawed vanities. He is without a single doubt the Widow Twanky of a tatty art junk world. Who cares about the trivia he produces over the works that shine from a myriad of other talents newspapers like this fail to recognise. This country is brimming over with inventive, curious and skilled artists...but of course most aren't cross dressers or transvestites which largely makes them anonymous and unpress worthy.

- AberRational Eastbister
17 May 2015 3:19

  "which largely makes them anonymous and unpress worthy."

  Give us some names then so the Guardian can investigate.

- Afrochic AberRational
17 May 2015 5:21

  He probably meant himself (grin)

- Dave Peacock
17 May 2015 2:16

It looks like something from a horrible nightmare, bury the thing under a pile of horse muck!

- FrenchScouse
17 May 2015 2:16

This is just silly. Pure silliness on a grand scale. Normally, I like silliness, but somehow, for a reason that wasn't clear to me until now, this house kind of left me cold...

Then, I got it. The price tag, 800 quid for a weekend, suddenly kills the silliness. No one would shed 800 quid on a bit of a laugh! One shed this money on something serious, something grand. It turns the house into something that it is not. Or worse, anyone with 800 pound spare to splash on a joke are a different class of people with lots of money... Lots. Which makes silliness and jokes out of reach for the ordinary folk.

- defizr
17 May 2015 2:17

What's with all the tiles? Is it a public lavatory?

- outoftcrookedtimber
17 May 2015 2:17

Lose the dormer windows and the triangular tiling and you've got a scaled down version of Gladsheim from the Prose Edda.

The pitch of the roof, scale of roof to the walls, the 'nestled' succession of rooms &c reminds me of early mediaeval scandinavian buildings.

- horrifiedexlab
17 May 2015 2:21

Is it correct that the Guardian is going to re-named 'The Grayson'? Clearly, as the fragrant GP has to appear in its pages at least five times a week peddling his tat it would make sense.

- AshleyPomeroyhorrifiedexlab
17 May 2015 3:42

"with The Olia on Sunday"

- Theprowler
17 May 2015 2:28

Ugly, horrible, unnecessary.

- cerises Theprowler
17 May 2015 2:59

Don't over-identify with your comment, will you?

- tiojo
17 May 2015 2:58

Absolutely wonderful. A modern day folly accessible (at a price) to the public. Let's hope it's built to last. it is good to see contemporary artists commissioned to build something of this scale. If only more of today's rich could bring themselves to be cultural philanthropists we would have more of this sort of thing. What do footballers do with all their money? Can't they be persuaded to spend it on something worthwhile?

- LlamaRiot tiojo
17 May 2015 3:16

It's only accessible to people who think nothing of spending £1800 to rent a house for the weekend.

I pity the poor people of Wrabness - what did they do to deserve having this monstrosity imposed upon them? It looks like an oversized Victorian public toilet.

Basically a London based artist teamed up with a London based cod philosopher and commissioned some London based architects to build this thing on the Essex/Suffolk border (in an area of outstanding natural beauty I might add) so rich Londoners could feel smug about staying there.

The locals can get stuffed - "we're doing you a favour, this 'art' is for you - it's about somebody from Wrabness (who I made up in my head)".

- tiojo LlamaRiot
17 May 2015 3:32

> It looks like an oversized Victorian public toilet.

Great. Have you seen the ones in the Philharmonic in Liverpool?

https://www.flickr.com/photos/54270613@N04/6795442707

- LlamaRiot tiojo
17 May 2015 3:47

The thing is, everything I've read about Alain de Botton suggests he hates pastiche architecture.

Has he changed his mind? Perhaps a mock Tudor mansion in Cheshire next?

- Patrick Ryan
17 May 2015 3:35

I'm a fan of Grayson Perry - He's got real talent and a broad array of skills from pottery to sculpture to ceramics to tapestry to painting and now a piece of interesting architecture. The level of attention lavished on this little building is amazing - Perry says he never wanted to do bland art and with this project he's definitely not bland. The architecture around his little jewel building in Essex is ultra bland so I think Grayson has added something interesting to the local debate and ruffled a few feathers in the process - so good for him....

- Kindofnew

17 May 2015 3:40

It's wonderful!

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The Gruesome Legend of Swedish King Might Actually Be True

atlasobscura.com

Forensic evidence gives credence to mythic life (and death) of Erik the Lawgiver.

by Jessie Guy-Ryan
March 19, 2016



For decades, various medieval scholars have labored to prove—or disprove—details of various medieval kings' lives. In recent years, DNA testing has allowed scientists insights into the true lives of medieval rulers and prompted calls for re-examination of the legends and secondary sources that inform their biographical sketches.

Now, a Swedish team from Uppsala University has used forensic analysis to prove that in one king's case, the legends seem to be true.

Erik IX—also called Erik Jedvardsson, Eric the Lawgiver, and Saint Erik—was a Swedish king and Catholic saint, reigning from around 1150 to May 18, 1160. For a king, Erik is something of a mystery—no contemporary Swedish historical accounts discuss him, although he is mentioned briefly in the *Sverissaga*, a near-contemporary Norwegian epic documenting the reign of King Sverre Sigurdsson. The only detailed account of Erik's rule is found in the Catholic legend constructed after he achieved sainthood, describing him as a devoted Christian who codified Swedish law and led a crusade against Finland, only to be decapitated by a rival for the throne. It's a fairly typical medieval saint-king life, from a time when such legends couldn't be counted on for truthfulness. According to the researchers, the basic legend of Erik seems to stem from a longer, much older legend that has since been lost, casting more doubt on its accuracy. Similarly, many scholars now agree that the story of King Arthur mixes centuries of Welsh folklore with a tribal leader who may or may not have existed, so it's not far-fetched to assume that other medieval accounts of kings may do the same.

Despite the lack of biographical details, Erik is well-known to modern Swedes. He is the patron saint of Stockholm, featuring in the city's coat of arms, and his elaborate reliquary is displayed in the Uppsala Cathedral.

This combination of present-day prominence and biographical mystery prompted Uppsala University's interdisciplinary research team to leverage recent advances in forensic technology to uncover more details of his life and death, opening the reliquary in a ceremony in 2014.

Wednesday's press release from Uppsala University explains the exhaustive interdisciplinary research the team utilized in the two years since they opened the reliquary and began their work,

including radiocarbon dating, aDNA analysis (ancient DNA), isotope analysis, and forensic medicine. According to the researchers, 23 of the 24 bones in the reliquary belonged to the same individual—there's also a bonus "mystery" shinbone—who was male, between 35 and 40 years old, and died around 1160. The skull shows signs of healed wounds that may have occurred in battle, aligning with the tales of a Finnish crusade. So far, so good.

But the most interesting discoveries surround Erik's death. According to the researchers, "The saint's legend says that in the king's final battle, the enemy swarmed him, and when he fell to the ground they gave him wound after wound until he lay half dead. They then taunted him and finally cut off his head." True to legend, Erik's bones show signs of cuts inflicted in connection with his death and indicate that he was lying face-down during the injuries. Furthermore, one of his neck vertebra was cut through; not only is this consistent with decapitation, the injury could not have been inflicted during battle as the hauberks worn at the time would protect that part of the neck. This aligns with the legend's assertion that he was swarmed in battle, captured, and taunted prior to his decapitation. So while the research doesn't tell us much about what Erik was like as a person, the available evidence of the king's death in no way contradicts the account in Catholic legend.

The full research results will be published in an upcoming article in *Fornvännen*, a journal published by the Swedish National Heritage Board, and the Uppsala University team will continue performing other forensic tests on Erik's remains for at least the next year. For now, though, the team has concluded that sometimes legends turn out to be true.

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Harambe the Gorilla Gets Revenge in New Short Film - Dread Central

dreadcentral.com

Dread Central

Posted on June 10, 2016by David Gelmini

You can call me crazy, but I never understood why humans consider themselves superior to animals. Sure, we have superior thinking and reasoning abilities, but in no way does that make us better than them, and it certainly doesn't mean that we should have the right to end their lives as we see fit.

The case of Harambe the gorilla is indeed tragic, even more so when you consider that, aside from dragging him through the water, the poor ape didn't seem to be about to harm the kid in any way.

Well, regardless of how you feel about the killing of Harambe, YouTube channel **WTFLOL** has posted a pretty funny (and brutal) video that attempts to shed light on the zoo staff's side of the story, complete with a "Weird Al" Yankovic cameo.

Synopsis:
America is going bananas over Harambe the #gorilla, the #Cincinnati Zoo, and that pesky kid. While none of us were actually there, we're pretty sure this is EXACTLY how it went down. Probably. Maybe. #RIPHarambe



extreme zookeeper-2

News Harambe vs. Zoo Kid: When Social Media Attacks, Weird Al Yankovic, WTFLOL

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The Harvest Customs and Traditions in Dorset

wordpress.com

https://dorsetcountymuseum.wordpress.com/2015/08/01/the-harvest-customs-and-traditions-in-dorset/



Posted on August 1, 2015 by dorsetcountymuseum



Extract taken from the Chambers Book of Days August 1st 1864, details the traditions of Lammas.

"**LAMMAS** – This was one of the four great pagan festivals of Britain, the others being on 1st November, 1st February, and 1st May. The festival of the Gule of August, as it was called, probably celebrated the realisation of the first-fruits of the earth, and more particularly that of the grain-harvest. When Christianity was introduced, the day continued to be observed as a festival on these grounds, and, from a loaf being the usual offering at church, the service, and consequently the day, came to be called Half-mass, subsequently shortened into Lammas, just as hlaf-dig (bread-dispenser), applicable to the mistress of a house, came to be softened into the familiar and extensively used term, lady. This we would call the rational definition of the word Lammas.

There is another, but in our opinion utterly inadmissible derivation, pointing to the custom of bringing a lamb on this day, as an offering to the cathedral church of York. Without doubt, this custom, which was purely local, would take its rise with reference to the term Lammas, after the true original signification of that word had been forgotten. It was once customary in England, in contravention of the proverb, that a cat in mittens catches no mice, to give money to servants on Lammas-day, to buy gloves; hence the term Glove-Silver. It is mentioned among the ancient customs of the abbey of St. Edmund's, in which the clerk of the cellarer had 2d.; the cellarer's squire, 11d.; the granger, 11d.; and the cowherd a penny. Anciently, too, it was customary for every family to give annually to the pope on this day one penny, which was thence called Denarius Sancti Petri, or Peter's Penny.'—Hampson's Medii AEvi Kalendarium.

What appears as a relic of the ancient pagan festival of the Gule of August, was practised in Lothian till about the middle of the eighteenth century. From the unenclosed state of the country, the tending of cattle then employed a great number of hands, and the cow-boys, being more than half idle, were much disposed to unite in seeking and creating amusement. In each little district, a group of them built, against Lammas-day, a tower of stones and sods in some conspicuous place.

On Lammas-morning, they assembled here, bearing flags, and blowing cow-horns — breakfasted together on bread and cheese, or other provisions—then set out on a march or procession, which usually ended in a foot-race for some trifling prize. The most remarkable feature of these rustic fetes was a practice of each party trying, before or on the day, to demolish the sod fortalice of some other party near by. This, of course, led to great fights and brawls, in which blood was occasionally spilt. But, on the whole, the Lammas Festival of Lothian was a pleasant affair, characteristic of an age which, with less to gain, had perhaps rather more to enjoy than the present"

Dorset Folklorist, John Symonds Udal wrote about the customs and traditions of Harvest Home in Dorset in his book 'Dorsetshire Folklore' published in 1922:-

HAY-MAKING


Haymaking in Dorset – DCM © 2015

The season of hay-making would seem never to have been such a period of gaiety and festivity in Dorsetshire as was the case with the "harvest-home" gatherings later in the year. The success of the hay harvest, however, was a very important matter to so large a pastoral community as the county comprised; and without doubt some celebration by way of reward for and appreciation of services loyally rendered, often in long extended hours of work when the weather was uncertain, was indulged in at the conclusion of that harvest. Extra money payments, as in the corn harvest, have largely taken the place of social gatherings and festivities amongst the labourers in which their employers once freely joined. Still in many places at the ingathering of the hay an extra jar of cider or ale would be brought out, and the men would sit down and have a chat amongst themselves and, perhaps, a song or two ; whilst at the close hats would be raised and " hip, hip, hurrahs " would be given.

In later years, both in hay and corn harvesting, machinery has taken a very active part in reducing the amount of manual labour employed in these operations, which at its introduction went sorely against the conservative feelings of the Dorset peasant. This feeling was just as strongly expressed as in the great industrial centres in the North where labour-saving appliances were ever on the increase; and sometimes took the form of reprisals by way of burning hay and corn ricks as well as the occasional destruction of the offending machinery.

Under these influences in course of time the very names of the old haymakers' several occupations would be lost. In William Barnes's early days—a century ago—these were numerous and distinctive. We are fortunate in having him to record what they were. Here is a description which he gives in his Glossary (1863) of what haymaking was like in his time (s.v. Häymeäken).

"Hay-making consists of several operations which with fine weather, commonly follow each other in Dorsetshire, thus : The mown grass—in zwath, swath,—is thrown abroad—tedded, and afterwards turned once or twice ; in the evening it is raked up into little ridges—rollers,—single or double, as they may be formed by one raker, or by two raking against each other ; and sometimes put up into small cones or heaps, called cocks. On the following morning the rollers or cocks are thrown abroad in passels—parcels,—which, after being turned, are in the evening put up into large ridges—weals ; and the weals are sometimes pooked, put up into larger cones—pooks,—in which the hay is loaded. In raking grass into double rollers, or pushing hay into weals, the fore raker or pickman is said to rake in or push in, or row or roo, and the other to close."

Barnes had already preserved many of these terms in two of his charming dialect poems, one on "Häymeäken ", and the other on "Häy-carrén" (pp. 51-2), which afford so delightful a picture of rustic life in the hay-field that one feels inclined to say, too:

"I do long to toss a pick,
A pitchén or a-meäkén rick."

HARVEST HOME

The celebration of the ingathering of the corn harvest is common to all our counties and to most countries. Full accounts of these festivals and their significance may be found in Brand's, Hone's, and Chambers's works, as well as in those of less known writers.

It is to the late William Barnes that we might expect to look for a fitting description of a Dorset harvest-home feast, or supper, and we find it in an account,—as particular and as life-like as a painting of an old Dutch interior —of what usually took place on these occasions, which he contributed to Hone's Year Book (p. 586), from which I take the following extract:—

"Harvest Home, formerly celebrated with great mirth but now a declining usage, was a feast given by the farmer at the end of harvest, or when his hay and corn were got in ... Some years ago the ' harvest home ' in my native county, Dorset, was kept up with good old English hospitality.



Reapers gathering the harvest – DCM © 2015

"When the last load was ricked the labourers, male and female, the swarthy reaper and the sun-burnt hay-maker, the saucy boy who had not seen twelve summers and the stiff horny-handed old mower who had borne the toil of fifty, all made a happy groupe, and went with singing and loud-laughing to the harvest-home supper at the farmhouse, where they were expected by the good mistress, dressed in a quilted petticoat and a linsey-wolsey apron, with shoes fastened by large silver buckles which extended over her foot like a pack-saddle on a donkey.

"The dame and her husband welcomed them to a supper of good wholesome food, a round of beef, and a piece of bacon; and perhaps the host and hostess had gone so far as to kill a fowl or two, or stick a turkey, which they had fattened in the wheat-yard. The plain English fare was eaten from wooden trenchers, by the side of which were put little cups of horn filled with beer or cider. When the cloth was removed one of the men, putting forth his large hand like the gauntlet of an armed knight, would grasp his horn of beer, and standing up on a pair of legs which had long out-grown the largest holes of the village stocks, and with a voice which, if he had not been speaking a dialect of the English language, you might have thought came from the deep-seated lungs of a lion, he would propose the health of the farmer in the following lines :—

'Here's a health unto our miaster
The founder of the feast,
And I hope to God wi' all my heart
His soul in heaven mid rest;
That everything mid prosper
That ever he tiak in hand,
Vor we be all his sarvants,
And all at his command.'

"After this would follow a course of jokes, anecdotes, and songs, in some of which the whole company joined, without attention to the technicalities of counterpoint, bass, tenor, and treble, common chords and major thirds; but each singing the air and pitching in at the key that best fitted his voice, making a medley of big and little sounds, like the lowings of oxen and the low beatings of old ewes, mixed up with the shrill pipings of the lambs at a fair.

"The conversation commonly turned on the incidents of the summer ; how the hay-makers overtook the mowers, or how the rain kept the labour back ; how they all crept in a heap under the waggon in a thunderstorm ; how nearly some of them were crushed under the load that was upset; who was the best mower or reaper in the village ; which field yielded the best crop ; and which stack was most likely to heat."

Later Barnes devoted two of his charming dialect poems to a similar description, which form such a delightful complement to the whole subject that I have no hesitation in reproducing them here in full. They are to be found at pp. 78-80 of the first collected edition of the poems published by Kcgan Paul & Co. in 1879, and again in 1888. (The first edition of Poems of Rural Life in the Dorset Dialect was in 1844, whilst the earlier edition of Hone's Year Book in which Barnes's contribution first appeared was published in 1832. A change of spelling in some of the dialect words,—particularly the '"vowel sounds ",— (e.g. " ia ", in " miaster ", or " tiak ", to " eā, ") will be noticed in the earlier and later editions of the poems ; a scheme not involving so much a change of pronunciation» perhaps, but, as justified by Barnes in the preface to the third edition of his " first collection" of poems, published in 1862, on the ground that " while it affords the Dorset forms of the words to Dorset readers it may make them of more English look and more legible to others ".)

HARVEST HWOME

The vu'st peärt. The Supper.

"Since we wer striplèns naïghbour John,

The good wold merry times be gone:
But we do like to think upon
What we've a-zeed an' done.
When I wer up a hardish lad,
At harvest hwome the work-vo'k had
Sich suppers, they wer jumpèn mad
Wi' feästèn an' wi' fun.

At uncle's, I do mind, woone year,
I zeed a vill o' hearty cheer;
Fat beef an' puddèn, eäle an' beer,
Vor ev'ry workman's crop
An' after they'd a-gie'd God thanks,
They all zot down, in two long ranks,
Along a teäble-bwoard o' planks,
Wi' uncle at the top.

An' there, in platters, big and brown,
Wer red fat beäcon, an' a roun'
O' beef wi' gravy that would drown
A little rwoastèn pig;
Wi' beäns an' teäties vull a zack,
An' cabbage that would meäke a stack,
An' puddèns brown, a-speckled black
Wi' figs, so big's my wig.

An' uncle, wi' his elbows out,
Did carve, an' meäke the gravy spout;
An' aunt did gi'e the mugs about
A-frothèn to the brim.
Pleätes werden then ov e'then ware,
They ate off pewter, that would bear
A knock; or wooden trenchers, square,
Wi' zalt-holes at the rim.

An' zoo they munch'd their hearty cheer,
An' dipp'd their beards in frothy-beer,
An' laugh'd, an' jok'd–they couldden hear
What woone another zaid.
An' all o'm drink'd, wi' woone accword,
The wold vo'k's health: an' beät the bwoard,
An' swung their eärms about, an' roar'd,

Enough to crack woone's head.

Second Peärt. What they did after Supper.

Zoo after supper wer a-done,
They clear'd the teäbles, an' begun
To have a little bit o' fun,
As long as they mid stop.
The wold woones took their pipes to smoke,
An' tell their teäles, an' laugh an' joke,

A-lookėn at the younger vo'k,
That got up vor a hop.

Woone screäp'd away, wi' merry grin,
A fiddle stuck below his chin;
An' woone o'm took the rollėn pin,
An' beät the fryėn pan.
An' tothers, dancėn to the soun',
Went in an' out, an' droo an' roun',
An' kick'd, an' beät the tuėn down,
A-laughėn, maïd an' man.

An' then a maïd, all up tip-tooe,
Vell down; an' woone o'm wi' his shoe
Slit down her pocket-hole in two,
Vrom top a-most to bottom.
An' when they had a-danc'd enough,
They got a-playÿėn blindman's buff,
An' sard the maïdens pretty rough,
When woonce they had a-got em.

An' zome did drink, an' laugh, an' roar,
An' lots o' teäles they had in store,
O' things that happen'd years avore
To them, or vo'k they know'd.
An' zome did joke, an' zome did zing,
An' meäke the girt wold kitchen ring;
Till uncle's cock, wi' flappėn wing,
Stratch'd out his neck an' crow'd.

To these Barnes has added " A Zong of the Harvest Home " (p. 80), of which the refrain to each of the six verses is:

"The happy zight—the merry night—
The men's delight—the Harvest Hwome."

Again, many years later, in his " Fore-say " to this work, Barnes speaks of the decline of the old-time celebrations of this festival. He says: "The feasts of Harvest-Home in which the work-folk were invited to

'the hall
where beards wagged all,—'(Thomas Tusser: Five Hundred Points of Husbandry)

to share of mirth and meat under the smiles of the master and mistress, as tokens of approbation of their work, are now less customary than they formerly were, as in these commercial days it seems to be felt that the clock measures all the workman owes his master and the paytable all that the master owes to him."

As Brand says (i, 443), " Different places adopt different ceremonies " ; but that which seems to me to conform most to the Dorset ritual on these occasions is that of " crying the knack ", or " neck ", in the neighbouring counties of Devon and Cornwall, and in which there seems not only a strong affinity but traces of considerable antiquity. (Conf. Shropshire Folk-lore, pp372-3)

In 1873 I contributed an article to Notes and Queries (Ser. iv, xii, 491), describing " A Dorsetshire Harvest-Home " in West Dorset, which I had recently attended, and this I now reproduce :

"It was my good fortune to be present in September last at one of those old-fashioned gatherings in the West of Dorset, a harvest-home, and I thought that perhaps an account of such a quaint and time-honoured custom might not be unacceptable to some among the readers of ' N. and Q.', especially as these congenial meetings are becoming scarcer year by year and ere long bid fair to rank amongst the things that have been. Small sums

of money are now in many places given to the men, women, and boys instead of the usual supper, a practice that I am sorry to say seems to be on the increase, and which I here offer up my voice to protest against.

" I say 'sorry', first, because it denotes a departure from old customs, and, secondly, because the purpose for which the alteration is intended is, it seems to me, but very imperfectly carried out. At the time of such a general holiday in the parish the labourers of one farm do not seem willing to disperse quietly to their own homes and husband the few shillings they may have received as 'largess', whilst their fellows are enjoying themselves on another farm ; but rather to keep up a harvest-home of their own in the village ale-house, though, I need scarcely say, not of so orderly a character as that of the bond fide supper ; and which, to tell the truth, they themselves much prefer, for a ' Dorsetshire labourer ', though he may be poor, is none the less Conservative.
"On the day appointed for the celebration of the harvest, the labourers from the several farms attended afternoon service in the parish church, dressed in their best clothes, the church being decorated in the usually seasonable manner. The entrance-gates of the principal farms were likewise decorated with an arch of evergreen, flowers, corn, etc., crowned with a sickle and scythe swathed in bands of wheat barley, the whole surmounted by appropriate mottoes.

"In the evening tables were laid out in the kitchen of a size sufficient to accommodate the men, women, boys and girls employed on the farm, the ' master ', assisted by such members of his family as might be, sitting at their head and carving a grand rump of Old English beef.

"As soon as the company had partaken of as much beef and plum-pudding as was considered desirable an adjournment was made to a large tree that stood near the homestead, where the following quaint custom—peculiar, I was informed, to the west of Dorset—took place. (it would seem to be somewhat similiar to the custom of 'crying the knack', which obtains to Devon and Cornwall)

"The men formed themselves into a circle, and each taking off his hat and holding it out in front of him, stooped to the ground; then, led by one standing in the centre, chanted the words : ' We have 'em ' (or ' 'en'). The first word, ' We/ is commenced in a very low tone, the men the while slowly and gradually raising themselves up, and so prolonged till they have almost reached their full height. They close the sentence by saying ' have 'em ' more quickly. This is done three times. They then shout ' Huzza ! ' once. Again they stoop down and go the same performance ; finishing up this time with two ' huzzas'. This is repeated once more, and finally wound up by huzzaing three times. As soon as the men have finished the women come forward and go through the same ceremony. This, when well performed, a not altogether unimpressive or unmusical effect. The words, I believe, bear reference to the conclusion of the harvest and the sheaves of corn being satisfactorily ' had ' in.

"The discharge of small cannon, (the peculiar care of the boys) likewise gave considerable éclat to the whole proceeding. This over, the party returned to the house and entered upon a course of singing and drinking, not unmixed with dancing in the back kitchen.

"The first song was, of course, in honour of the ' meäster ', and unenriched by the Dorset vernacular indulged in by the toast-master, was in the following words :—

'Here's a health unto our master,
The founder of the feast,
And when that he is dead and gone,
I hope his soul may rest.
I wish all things may prosper,
Whatever he takes in hand.
For we are all his servants
And serve at his command.So drink, boys, drink!
And see that you do not spill.For if you do,You shall drink two,
"Tis by your master's will.'
"This song is repeated till everybody present has drunk the health.

'Here's Mrs' (or Mr's) good health !Let the glass go roundAnd the trumpet sound,— Huzza ! huzza ! huzza ! Down fall all the re-bels,We long to see the day,—Con-fusion unto themThat set 'em up again ! Huzza I huzza i huzza !Confusion etc.'

"This, like the last, was repeated till all had drunk.

"Then followed the curious and laughable custom of' drinking to your love over the left arm '. Each man, while the following verse was being sung, was obliged to drain his mug or horn-cup of ale by holding it in his right hand, and passing it outside of and over his left arm, which would be thrown across the chest. Great merriment was afforded when some of the older hands, through age or other infirmities failed to accomplish this in a satisfactory manner. The words sung were the following :—

' As I was a-riding over a mountain so highI saw a pretty girl that plea-sed my eye,She plea-sed my eye, but pla-gued my heart;From this cup of liquor we never will part;'Twill do us no good,—'twill do us no harm."Here's a health to my love, over left arm, over left arm! "Here's a health etc.'

"This was continued till all had satisfactorily passed the crucial test. Songs of a more general character and sundry speeches followed; and eventually the proceedings were brought to a close about midnight by the whole company joining in the National Anthem, ' God Save the Queen.' "

The following version, similar but less ornate, of the " whooping " ceremony,—as it was called in the district,—was given me as having been performed at a farmhouse in the same neighbourhood as the last. At the end of the harvest a jar of cider or ale and two small cups were taken just outside the yard, when all the labourers would gather in a circle round the jar, which is presided over by the oldest man amongst them, and, taking off their hats and standing in a stooping position, would bow slowly down to the ground, whilst singing in a low, guttural, drawling tone, " We-e-e-e have 'en ! " They then stand upright again and holloa " hurrah " once. This is gone through a second time, when the " hurrah" is given twice. Again, a third repetition, when three " hurrahs " are given. They then have a drink all round; after which they return mostly for songs or dances after supper. I have been told that these cheers were often heard at a distance of a mile or two!

At the time I sent the above account to Notes and Queries I was not acquainted with Jacob Grimm's Teutonic Mythology—or, rather, Stallybrass's translation of it,—in four volumes, which were not published till 1880-8. After I had read it I was struck by the very strong resemblance to the Dorset " whooping ", as it is called, that exists in the custom of the people in Lower Saxony invoking their great god Woden at the conclusion of the harvest. Grimm states (i, 154) that it is usual to leave a clump of corn standing in a field to Woden for his horse.



Mr Wellen of Charlton Marshall at a Harvest Festival, taken 1940 – DCM © 2015

He then describes (p. 156) a custom in Schaumburg where the people, having finished the mowing of the corn, or having purposely left only a small strip standing which they could cut down at a stroke, then at the finish would raise their implements aloft, beating the blades three times with the strop, while each would spill a small quantity of beer on the ground and then drink himself. They would then wave their hats and beat their scythes three times and cry aloud, " Wôld-wôld-wôld" which, Grimm says, a Schaumburg man pronounced as " wauden ". They would then march home shouting and singing. If the ceremony were omitted the next year would bring bad crops of hay and corn.

It is a pity that Grimm did not know of the custom as existing in western Dorsetshire, which I have described above. I wonder whether he would have agreed with the suggestion that I now venture to make, that the Dorset labourers' cry in this corner of old Wessex of "We hav'en ", repeated three times, is but a survival of the old invocation to the great god Woden of their Saxon ancestors, still continued from time immemorial at these harvest celebrations but of which the real significance and meaning have been lost.

Shortly before I left England in 1889 I was anxious to test this resemblance still further, so I invited certain of the farm labourers belonging to the same West Dorset parish—Symondsbury— in which the ceremony had been performed in 1873, after they had attended the now usual harvest festival service at the old parish church, to do their " whooping " on the lawn in front of the Manor House close to the church. They went through it all in much the same way as their predecessors had done, and again the close affinity to what Grimm had related was borne in upon me. Out of compliment to him I added a further Teutonic association that was by no means unacceptable to the performers. I made the men drink the healths from a tall seventeenth century pewter tankard, or loving-cup, with covered lid (of which there were one or two similar ones in the Victoria and Albert Museum at South Kensington), of a capacity of several quarts, which had formerly been the property of some civic company or guild in some German town (to judge from the inscription), this being the first opportunity I had

had of putting it to anything approaching its former use. It would be a strange but not inappropriate incident if it should again, after so many years, have assisted in the survival of an ancient Teutonic festivity.

I have since obtained from locally printed sources and otherwise a few songs or verses that were sung at harvest-home gatherings. Several of these, as I have already pointed out, may also have been sung at sheep-shearing feasts in the days when these feasts were more worthy of the name. The main toasts were evidently the same. In particular the one sent by Mr. T. H. Garland to the Dorset County Chronicle (which had reprinted my paper from Notes and Queries), wherein he added that he was a West Dorset man and had for many years witnessed the old customs to which I had alluded.
The following verse appeared in the Bridport News in 1874 as having been sung at the same place as my account referred to:

"When the wheat is all ripe the harvest begin,The farmer the fruits of the earth gather in ;In the mornings as soon as the reap hooks are grindWe repair to the field for to reap and to bind."

Another couplet ran :—

"When the harvest is over to our master's we will steer, And wet a good supper with a drink of strong beer."

The following toast was given by a farm labourer at a harvest home at Blandford in 1849 (" N. & Q.," Ser. v, x, 306. For a more correctly rhyming Worcestershire variant see the same volume, p. 375) :—

" Drink, boys, drink, and see you do not spill;
If you do you shall drink two,
For 'tis our master's will."

"Horses strong, sheep healthy,
Barns full, money plenty."

A correspondent in Notes and Queries in 1878 (Ser. v, x, 375) speaks to his having heard, some forty years previously, the same refrain

" Drink, boys, drink, and see you do not spill;
If you do you shall drink two,
For 'tis our master's will."

at a sheep-shearing feast in the lower part of Dorsetshire, when each man was supplied with a small cup of about the third of a pint to drink the customary healths in.

Forfeits.—Amongst the amusements at harvest home suppers forfeits appear to have been sometimes indulged in (though such games were usually set apart for Christmas), when songs or rhythmic jingles were sung with the object of entrapping the unwary. The following were given me as having been used at harvest homes in the parish of Stoke Abbott, also in West Dorset.

One of the company leads off with the following rhythmic jingle, followed by the others :—

"Green grow the leaves on the hawthorn tree,Some grow high and some grow low; With my ringo and my jingoWe seldom disagree,And the tenor of my song goes merrily— And the tenor of my song goes merrily."
The leader alone then sings :

" Twenty, nineteen, eighteen—"
The next one in rotation :
" Seventeen, sixteen, fifteen—"
The next, in their order :
" Fourteen, thirteen, twelve—"" Eleven, ten, nine—"" Eight, seven, six—"
The last in rotation chimes in with " Five, four, three "—and they all add:
"And the tenor of my song goes merrily."

When this is done the person next to the leader begins it over again, and it goes on as before, except that when he comes to the figures he starts with " Seventeen, sixteen, fifteen "—the next to him taking it up as before, and

so on to the end. This over, the third person in rotation commences the strain, beginning the figures at " Fourteen, thirteen, twelve "—and so on as before until the whole is exhausted.

Should anyone make a mistake in repeating his portion he must pay forfeit, which, on these occasions, generally consists in being made to drink something.

Here is another one from the same place :—

"O splice the cable-rope,
The rope it is so fine;*
And with a sugar loaf we'll have
A glass of currant wine ;
And if the wine is sharp
The sugar makes it sweet;
What greater joy in all the world
When two sweethearts do meet!
With my Rider, Ready, Rum,
My Rider, Ready, Rum,
So drink half your liquor, boys,
And say no more than ' Mum'.
So drink off your liquor,
boys,And say no more than 'Mum'!"

- **Possibly a covert allusion to the excellent quality of the hemp grown in the neighbourhood. So highly was it esteemed that a statute, 21 Henry VIII, provided that cables intended for the use of the Royal Navy should be made from hemp grown within a certain radius of Bridport, within which radius the parish of Stoke Abbott is situated.*

The above rhyme is sung by all the company together, after which the leader, and any one who may be initiated in the game, endeavour to entrap the person sitting next them into answering more than the permitted " Mum " by accusing him, truly or otherwise, of having made a mistake in singing or in drinking more than half the liquor at the wrong time, so as to entail a forfeit. The verse is then gone through again, and the next person is interrogated with the like object, and so on in rotation until all have been subjected to the ordeal."

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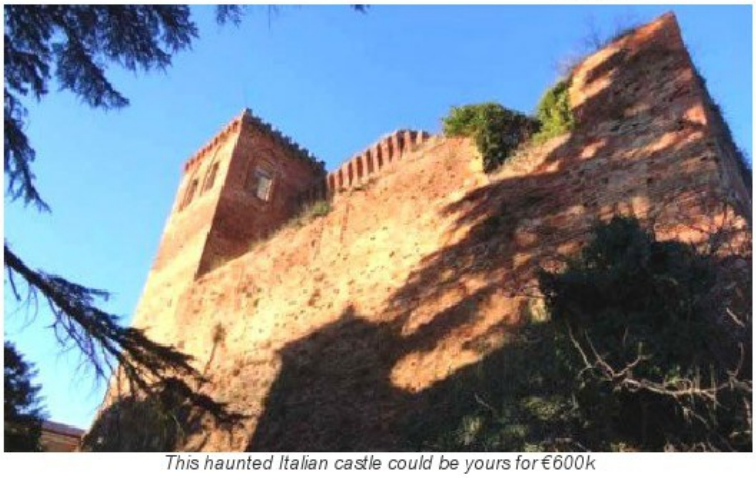
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This haunted Italian castle could be yours for €600k

03/08 thelocal.it

The Local



This haunted Italian castle could be yours for €600k

This haunted Italian castle could be yours for €600k

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A medieval castle, "complete with ghost and hidden treasure", is up for sale in Italy and will set you back half the price of a four-bedroom home London.

The 15th century castle is located in the town of Arignano, near Turin, and is on the market for €600,000 in its current state or €1.2 million if purchased fulled restored.

That's less than half the cost of a four-bedroom terrace in Brixton, London.

"Although structurally sound, the building is in need of restoration," states the property listing.

Whoever buys the castle will get 700m2 of living space, spread over three floors, each with seven-metre-high ceilings.

The property also boasts a rooftop terrace, a cellar, a medieval courtyard, defensive perimeter walls and a large garden.

At the centre of the property is a "massive, dominating and suggestive" 23-metre high turret which towers over the medieval town of Arignano below.

There is also a generous slice of intrigue for potential buyers.

Photo: Immobiliare.it

"Unchanged since the times of warring knights, dances and banquets, legend has it the building also contains a ghost and hidden treasure," the advert states.

Numerous witnesses claim to have seen a mysterious ghostly figure floating around the ancient castle and its gardens, while the hidden treasure is thought to lie in secret tunnels underneath the structure.

Photo: Immobiliare.it

Beneath the cellar, a 20km tunnel is rumoured to lead directly to the alchemists' caves underneath the Royal Palace of Turin.



The tunnel was supposedly used by the royal alchemists of the Turin court, who spent much of the 1700s attempting to discover the philosopher's stone. However, until now the tunnel's entrance has never been located.



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'Haunted swing' Forces Terrified Family From Playground

huffingtonpost.com

'Haunted swing' Forces Terrified Family From Playground

"We're at the playground, and the kids don't want to go anymore because look at this s—t," dad says.

07/07/2016 09:58 am ET

- Nina Golgowski Trends reporter, The Huffington Post

A Rhode Island family's playground plans were scrapped after video captured something that left them too terrified to leave their car.

Video uploaded to Facebook late last month showed a single blue swing wildly flying around, as if occupied by some invisible children.

"We're at the playground, and the kids don't want to go anymore because look at this s—t," Scotty Denton says before introducing the world to the so-called "haunted swing."

"There's no wind right now either," he insisted.

The one-minute video, that shows Denton gawking at the Warwick swing set with his three young kids around him, has been viewed more than 5.7 million times since it was uploaded on June 28th.

Some viewers suggest in the YouTube video's comment section that it's heavy wind that's catching the swing, which is much larger than the others on the set. Others suggest that it's a string that's pulling it.

For all "the haters," Denton returned to the park on Tuesday and shot a new video that asks, "Do you see a ghost?"

"It's perfectly still," he says while showing the blue swing resting in the now sunny park. "Just making a video for all you haters that said it's always swinging. No strings tied to it."

"This video is for all the haters out there who said that the video was bullsh-t. Obviously, it's not," he says as he films the surrounding park — and a skateboarder wearing a white sheet flies by in the background.

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Santa Clarita: The Haunting of Sand Canyon Road

backpackerverse.com



Many people drive down Sand Canyon Road in Santa Clarita every single day.

Some of them have reported getting goose bumps, feeling strange breezes, hot spots, and other weird things while travelling down this road.

They return with stories more blood-curdling than the hot sun beating down on you as you try to make sense of what just happened.

Sand Canyon Road in Santa Clarita holds a dreadful legend

The intersection of Warm Springs Road and Sand Canyon Road is known not only for connecting these two roads.... .

But also for the terrible accident that allegedly took place there in the mid '80s.

According to the legend, it all happened on prom night.

Apparently, some teens were driving their car down the road.

As the additional reports state, they were heading to the Nike Missile Site LA-94 near Bear Divide when their car crashed.

One girl and three guys were killed in the accident.

Alone in the night, they couldn't get any help.

Their spirits are resentful, they could have been saved.

And as it seems, they still can't let it go...

The ghosts of Sand Canyon Road

The locals spread a story of encounters with a female teen ghost on the road.

They had seen her seeking help for her injured friends – her hair flying on all sides and her face completely ruined.

They say that her eyes were all white and half of her skull was visible in the part of her nose and mouth.

Although it was hard to see her in the dark on Sand Canyon Road, her presence could be felt in the bones.

Floating above the ground, she sometimes launched her hands towards them and without saying a word tried to take them somewhere with her.

There're rumors of a spooky feeling, like someone is trying to grab you.

A lot of locals have felt it while standing there.

Luckily, in all cases, they escaped in time and never returned to that place. At least not during the night.

Other spectators describe the presence of one more ghost. This time, a male teen.

A man was investigating the place with a friend using their cameras and an EMF detector.

They went on the road early in the morning – somewhere around 1 a.m. Most of the time the detector stood flat.

But a few times it reacted to paranormal activity.

The whole atmosphere was creepy. They sensed other presences around them. Like they weren't alone.

At first, they were skeptical, but then they caught a potential EVP. A male teen voice speaking something.

They explained that it was a crackling sound, something out of the ordinary and it had nothing to do with the wind.

According to them, it sounded like someone was asking for help or something similar to that.

They didn't see it, but the sound was unmistakable.

"We're trying to go back over the footage now and see if we can determine what was being said," one of them says, a strange light in his eyes.

Obviously, he's still reconsidering everything they've witnessed that day.

And who wouldn't?

The mere thought that the ghosts of these teens are haunting Sand Canyon Road is reason enough for all of us to evade it if possible.

It appears that Santa Clarita is more dangerous at night than we think.

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memorie of MAN.

Which lately happened at *Dichet* in Sommerſetſhire, and ſent by diuers credible witneſſes to be publiſhed in LONDON.

Alſo a Propheſie reuealed by a poore Countrey Maide, who being dead the firſt of October laſt, 1613. 24. houres, reuiued againe, and lay fiue *dayes weeping, and continued propheſying of ſtrange euents to come, and ſo died the 5. day following.*

Witneſſed by M. *Nicholas Faber*, Parſon of the Towne, and diuers worthy Gentlemen of the ſame countrey. 1613,

Withall, Lincolneſhire Teares. For a great deluge, in which fiue Villages were lamentably drowned this preſent month.



At London printed for *Iohn Trundle*: and are to be ſold at Chriſt Church gate, 1614.

Updraft®

MPR News Weather and its underlying science

Heavy storms down Babe the Blue Ox

Paul Huttner **August 4, 2016, 8:07 AM**

Ox-sized severe thunderstorms downed a Minnesota icon overnight.



KSTP Traffic
@kstptraffic

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Blue! A viewer sent this pic into KSTP-TV after storms in Brainerd knocked over Babe the Blue Ox this morning.

6:09 AM - 4 Aug 2016

187 122

Overnight thunderstorms crossed northern Minnesota and maintained intensity rolling into the Twin Cities this morning.

- Latest Twin Cities radar loop



MPR Weather
@MPRweather

Follow

Warning: Severe T-Storm moving into west metro packing 60 mph winds. Batten down the hatches! #mnwx

5:56 AM - 4 Aug 2016

1

The storms pack heavy downpours and gusty winds. Scattered tree damage has been reported once again in northern and central Minnesota. A wind gust of 78 mph was recorded at Brainerd International Airport.

- 1 S Brainerd [Crow Wing Co, MN] PUBLIC reports TSTM WND DMG at 3:12 AM CDT — SEVERAL TREES DOWN AND TIN ROOF SHEETING SCATTERED ON ROAD NEAR SOUTHEAST 13TH STREET IN BRAINERD NEAR THE COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS. THE TIME OF OCCURRENCE WAS ESTIMATED FROM RADAR.
- 3 WNW Woodrow [Crow Wing Co, MN] ASOS reports TSTM WND GST of M78 MPH at 3:22 AM CDT — AT BRAINERD INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT.
- Hutchinson [Mcleod Co, MN] STORM CHASER reports TSTM WND DMG at 7:15 AM CDT — SMALL TO LARGE TREE LIMBS DOWN ALL OVER TOWN. SEVERAL MODERATE TO LARGE TREES DOWN AS WELL. SEMI-TRAILER BLOWN OVER JUST SOUTH OF TOWN. ONE AND ONE HALF INCH TO 2 INCHES OF RAIN FELL. REPORTED VIA SOCIAL MEDIA. TIME ESTIMATED FROM RADAR.

Heavy rains also affected commuters in the Twin Cities this morning.



Clayton Lott
@claytonrlott

Follow

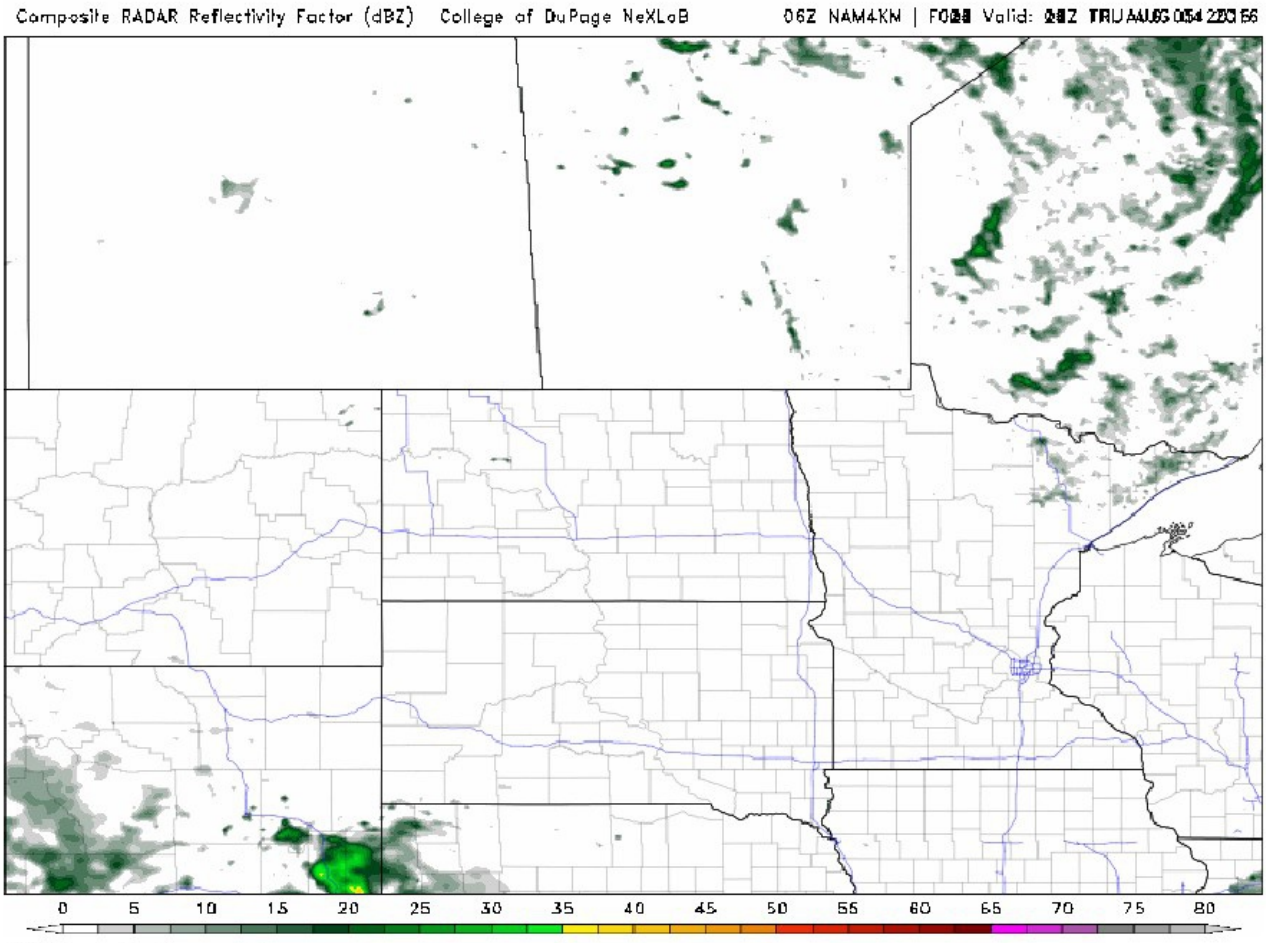
.@MPRweather Flooded lanes on University Ave in Blaine.
5:51 AM - 4 Aug 2016

Slight risk again this afternoon

The cool front lags today near the Twin Cities. A second wave of storms should fire along the front this afternoon and move into southeast Minnesota this evening. There is a slight risk of severe storms from east of Duluth into the Twin Cities then east and south.

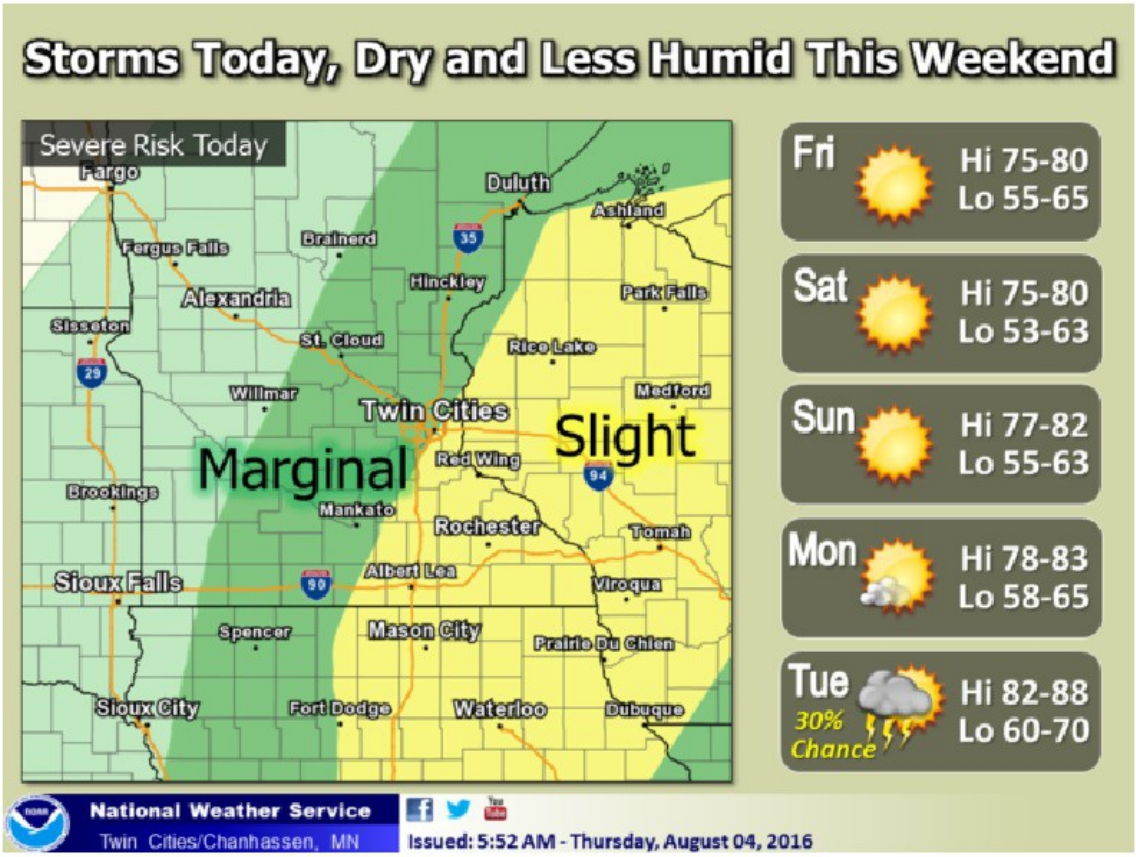


NOAA's NAM 4 km model pains the developing line of storms this afternoon near the Twin Cities before it races southeast.



NOAA via College of Dupage

Keep an eye out for possible watches and warnings again this afternoon.



About the blogger



Paul Huttner

phuttner@mpr.org

Paul Huttner is chief meteorologist for Minnesota Public Radio. Huttner has worked TV and radio stations in Minneapolis, Tucson and Chicago. Paul is a graduate of Macalester College in St. Paul and holds a bachelor's degree in geography with an emphasis in meteorology.

2 Comments MPR News - Updraft Login

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Hard Little Machine • 9 hours ago

Trump's fault.

• Reply • Share ›

John • 13 hours ago

Brainerd, that is God's way to telling you to stop trying to claim Paul & Babe. Everyone agrees, they belong to Bemidji.

- Pat Robertson

• Reply • Share ›

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'Heirs' to Prince's millions are multiplying

Maria Puente , USA TODAY

usatoday.com

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'Heirs' to Prince's millions are multiplying

USA TODAY



74376860 E ACE USA CA

Prince on June 1, 2007 in Pasadena, Calif. (Photo: Kevin Winter, Getty Images)

It's becoming ever clearer what happens when a multi-million-dollar estate like Prince's is up for grabs: Would-be "heirs" come romping out of the shadows.

If one believes the documents filed this week with the Carver County, Minn., court overseeing the distribution of Prince's estate, he had far more secret children, unknown siblings and distant cousins than anyone dreamed.

So far, no will setting out Prince's wishes for distributing his estate has been found. He had no spouse, no known surviving children and both his parents are dead.

Now, in addition to his one full sister, Tyka Nelson, his half-dozen known half-siblings or their descendants, and a federal prison inmate who claims he is a previously unknown son, come more claimants:

- Three more half-siblings. Two of them claim two different fathers who also fathered Prince, and neither man is the actual known father of Prince, John Nelson.
- Two more previously unknown children, one of whom claims to be his adopted son to whom he left $7 million. The other, a Connecticut woman who identifies herself as Taz Laeni Walker, says she was born in St. Paul and adopted by a family friendly with Prince. Walker is 43; Prince was 57 when he died.

"A friend of my (adoptive) father told me...my mother had multiple sexual partners and Prince's name was mentioned," she says in her document "I inferred from these conversations that my mother had sex with Prince. I believe that I may be the daughter of Prince."

- A woman who does not explain the nature of her relationship to Prince but demands to be included in the DNA testing anyway.
- And seven people (five women, two men) who claim to be descendants of the *sister* of Prince's great-great grandfather.

In other words, Prince's way distant cousins have stepped up to claim a cut of his estate, which may be worth as much as $300 million and is growing by the day since his April 21 death at Paisley Park in Carver County outside Minneapolis.

This latter group of claimants probably will get nowhere, says Laura Zwicker, a trusts and estates attorney for a major firm in Los Angeles. She says Minnesota law, like California law, bars such remote relatives from inheriting.

"The statute says 'closest living relatives' and stops there," she says. "So people who claim a more remote relationship to him are cut out by statute. The more interesting claims are the ones from people who claim to be a child, but they can be decided by genetic testing." (She was skeptical of Walker's claim to be a daughter of Prince just based on their ages.)



Prince, seen here at the Super Bowl in Miami in 2007, was found dead at Paisley Park compound on April 21, 2016. Since then, the public has gotten to know some of his potential heirs, the doctors who treated him or planned to, some of the lawyers involved in settling his estate, and the police investigating his death. Chris O'Meara, AP

Zwicker reiterates what many estates attorneys have been saying since Prince died: He should have drawn up a will.

"If he had a well-written estate plan, it could have eliminated all the expense and nonsense going on now," she says. "His estate plan could have included an intentional omission clause: 'These are the people I provide for and I intentionally deprive anyone else who claims to be an heir.' "

Zwicker says the failure to draw up an estate plan happens among some of her clients, especially in sports or the entertainment industry.

"My rich clients who are entrepreneurs, real-estate developers, hedge-fund creators, they're all business people and they understand the need to plan," she says. "Where I have fears about this happening is our clients who are professional athletes and in the entertainment industry. Their skill set is often completely different than planning ahead.

"There are times where we cannot bring a client to the finish line — they can't get over some hurdle" to sign the papers.

Meanwhile, because there is no will, more than half the value of Prince's estate could end up with the IRS (40% of estates over $5.4 million) and the state of Minnesota (16% of estates over $1.6 million). The deadline for sorting out the tax bills is in January, and Uncle Sam takes only cash.

The estate special administrator, Bremer Trust, has to find that cash, and also sort out claims on the estate from creditors, such as the treasurer of Eighth Day Sound Systems, who claims that Prince owes her $256,010.89 for audio services at Paisley Park not paid for.

A California man claims Prince promised to leave him $1 billion. And several other petitioners filed written claims that are rambling and incoherent to the point of impenetrable. But they're all in the file,

filling up boxes in the Carver County court clerk's office.

The deadline for filing as a potential heir and submitting proof, thus becoming eligible for DNA testing, was June 10; many of these new claims were filed Tuesday, so it's not clear whether they will be considered.

The next court hearing on the estate, before Judge Kevin Eide, is set for June 27.

Meanwhile, Bremer Trust is exploring ways to manage and monetize the estate to raise more money to help pay the tax bills. One of their ideas: Open up Paisley Park for public tours.





A Minnesota doctor saw Prince twice in the month before his death - including the day before he died - and prescribed him medication, according to a search warrant. Authorities returned to Prince's estate outside Minneapolis on Tuesday. (May 11) AP

Prince doesn't have any known living children, but there are a few potential heirs. Video provided by Newsy Newslook

Amidst conflicting statements from Prince's friends and family concerning the existence of his will, here is what we do know about the future of Paisley Park. VPC

Maurice Phillips said during a memorial service for the late singer, "He worked 154 hours straight. I was with him just last weekend." Video provided by Newsy Newslook

Prince, one of the best-selling recording artists in music history, passed today at just 57 years old. Widely considered one of the most influential musicians in history, his career spanned four decades. USA TODAY LIFE

For the third straight day, Prince fans in are flocking to the music superstar's home near Minneapolis. Hundreds have been leaving purple flowers and balloons along the fence of the



compound, called Paisley Park. (April 23) AP

Just days before his death, Prince tweeted a picture of a purple Yamaha piano that was custom made for him. Now executives at Yamaha are revealing the behind-the-scenes work that went into that very special instrument. (April 23) AP



Prince's publicist says his friends and family gathered late Saturday to say goodbye to the late 57-year-old musician. Video provided by Newsy Newslook

Prince, the musical icon, passed away at the age of 57. Here are 5 things we'll remember most about The Artist Formerly Known as Prince. VPC



No matter who you are, if you encountered the artist known as Prince, you likely got a hell of a story out of it. Video provided by Newsy Newslook

Prince was nothing if not unique. So it's no surprise that the beloved artist was a master of catching his fans off guard. USA TODAY

Cities honored the musical legend with purple lights on monuments, theater marquees and more. VPC

Dad Rock podcast hosts Jim Lenahan and Patrick Foster join Patty Michalski and Maeve McDermott to share their memories of Prince. Video by Jasper Colt, USA TODAY

From the ruffles to his colorful array of suits, Prince was never afraid to make bold fashion choices. VPC

Apr 22 -- Speaking at a joint news conference with British Prime Minister David Cameron in London, President Obama was asked about the death of musical legend Prince. The president said Prince was "full of life" and that his passing is a "remarkable Bloomberg



Fans around the world created makeshift memorials to mourn and celebrate music legend Prince, who died Thursday at Paisley Park, his suburban Minneapolis compound. (April 22) AP

Prince, one of the best-selling recording artists in music history, has died. He was 57, and his publicist confirmed his death. Widely considered one of the most influential musicians in history, his career spanned four decades Time







There were no apparent signs of trauma on Prince's body, according to investigators during a press conference. Prince was alone at his residence and found unresponsive in an elevator when he was pronounced dead. VPC

The iconic singer was found dead in his suburban Minneapolis home. Fans quickly began gathering outside Paisley Park to share their memories of Prince. USA TODAY

The Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery installed a portrait of Prince in the museum's In Memoriam space on Friday. (April 22) AP

The Courier-Journal's Music Critic Jeffrey Lee Puckett and music fan Tom Heiser compare notes to see if they agree on which are the Top 10 Prince songs of all time. Scott Utterback, The Courier-Journal







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Greenfield Couple Calls 911 Saying They Are Being Held Hostage by Cat

2016/06/22 cbs58.com



Greenfield Couple Calls 911 Saying They Are Being Held Hostage by Cat

Posted: Jun 22, 2016 3:17 PM PDT Updated: Jun 22, 2016 6:33 PM PDT
By Christie Green

A Greenfield couple called police to tell them they are being held hostage by their cat.

It happened last Friday after the cat had a bit of a meltdown take a listen.

"This is gonna sound like a strange question but we have a cat and it's going crazy and it attacked my husband and we're kind of hostage in our house and we're just wondering who we should call to do something, get rid of the cat or help us," said 911 caller.

The cat was captured and turned over to MADACC. No one was seriously hurt.

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Will A Mass Witch Hex Really Make Brock Turner Impotent?

huffingtonpost.com

HUFFPOST WEIRD NEWS

"Any bad luck that befalls Turner can be attributed to the hex and it can't be disproven."

06/10/2016 03:29 pm ET | **Updated** 7 hours ago

- David Moye Reporter, The Huffington Post

Many people are cursing the light sentence given to convicted Stanford rapist Brock Turner.

Some people are also hexing him.

On Tuesday night, witches around the world participated in a mass hexing ceremony designed to make the lives of Turner, his father and the judge who sentenced him miserable for the rest of their lives.

The mass hex was organized on Facebook by Melanie Elizabeth Hexen, a midwife in Wilton, Iowa.

"You will need a solid black candle, his photo, a black string, and a spell I will share on Facebook," she announced in a Monday Facebook post, though the official event page has been deleted.

About 600 pagans say they participated and some went the extra mile, claiming they added things like poop from a neighbor's dog, or their own urine, according to NY Mag.

The exact wording of the spell went like this, according to PaperMag.com:

> *"Brock Allen Turner we hex you.*
>
> *You will be impotent*
>
> *You will know constant pain of pine needles in your guts*
>
> *Food will bring you no sustenance*
>
> *In water, your lungs will fail you*
>
> *Sleep will only bring nightmares*
>
> *Shame will be your mantle.*
>
> *You will meet justice.*
>
> *My witchcraft is strong. Our witchcraft is powerful. The spell will work. So Mote it be."*

Although some wiccans and pagans believe that cursing someone might cause the same type of harm to come back three times, Hexen is not worried.

"I'm a witch, not a wiccan. I don't believe in karma or the power of three," she told The Huffington Post. "However, if I did believe in the rule of three, I would be happy to take that hit for the greater good of Brock Turner being impotent."

The verdict is out on whether a curse like this will actually have an effect, according to Ben Radford, deputy editor of Skeptical Inquirer magazine and member of the American Folklore Society.

“Curses only work if the people they’re placed on believe they will work,” Radford told HuffPost. “Take the evil eye. It’s believed in parts of Africa, Asia and Europe, but if you do it to someone in America, they won’t care.”

Radford agrees with the sentiment behind the mass hexing, but says it may be a form of “slacktivism.”

“It won’t harm Turner or help the victim,” he said. “It’s just a way to vent social outrage.”

Radford does admit the curse is foolproof in at least one way.

“Any bad luck that befalls Turner can be attributed to the hex and it can’t be disproven,” he said.

UPDATE: This story has been updated to include quotes from Hexen.



Lauren Pond/Religion News Service

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Hungary village opts for horses over bin lorries - BBC News

bbc.com

http://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-news-from-elsewhere-36518162

By News from Elsewhere... ...as found by BBC Monitoring

- 13 June 2016



Image copyrightArator/YouTube

Switching to horses could mean huge savings for the village budget

A village in western Hungary has started to collect recyclable waste from people's homes using horse-drawn carts.

The trial scheme in Nagyvazsony has seen conventional bin lorries replaced by the much quieter clip-clop of horses' hooves, in an effort to save money and help the environment. It's the idea of village mayor Szabolcs Janos Fabry, and is part of efforts to meet EU and Hungarian rules on collecting recyclable rubbish from every household in the country.

A video about the scheme says that while a regular bin lorry costs 50m forints to buy (£130,000; $180,000), a cart and the horses needed to pull it cost only 4m forints. Maintenance costs for the four-legged option are also cheaper, at about a third of those for the lorry, it says, adding that it could be a viable solution for 75% of Hungary's local government districts. A similar scheme was introduced by a borough in the Belgian capital, Brussels, in 2011.

Earlier this month, Mr Fabry, himself a prominent horse breeder, told the Vasarnapi Hirek site that it's expensive for small communities to meet the requirements for kerbside recycling, as lorries have to make several trips a day to collect it all. "By using the horse-drawn carts solution, not only would we save money and spare the environment, we would also once more give meaning to the historic fact that Hungary is an equestrian nation," he was quoted as saying.

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The truth behind your Orlando shooting hoaxes, theories and conspiracies

By Caitlin Dewey
June 16 at 12:25 PM

washingtonpost.com



Early on Tuesday, a police officer stands guard at a road block near the scene of the mass shooting at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando. (David Goldman/AP)

The Internet always floods with rumors and theories after a tragedy, and the aftermath of the Orlando shooting has predictably been no different. In the immediate absence of a clear and coherent narrative, people are all too willing to invent their own versions.

On Facebook, certain skeptics have circulated memes that allege three shooters attacked the Pulse nightclub. On YouTube, a viral video implies a link between Omar Mateen and an Iranian imam. On Twitter, rumors floated that Mateen used the gay dating app Jack'd and that a screenshot proved so.

And in more obscure corners of the Internet, a surprising (but not unusual!) number of people have insisted that the whole thing was a "false flag" attack — a hoax.

[False flags, true believers and trolls: Understanding conspiracy theories after tragedies]

The people who propagate these rumors, the last sort of rumors especially, often claim that the mainstream media never listens to or addresses them. And that is largely true, because — to someone who has just dropped everything, hopped a flight to Florida and spent three days interviewing traumatized witnesses — the notion that the whole thing might be made-up is patently ridiculous.

Still, we get that people have a lot of questions and suspicions after a tragedy, particularly when so many details remain unknown. So we asked a group of Post reporters, both in Washington and on the ground in Florida, to address some of the more popular rumors and conspiracy theories currently going viral on Twitter, YouTube and Facebook. Here are their explanations.

There are a few Facebook posts going around claiming that there were two or three shooters, or that there were two shooters and one guy blocking the exit doors. How do we know there was only one shooter? And what would cause eyewitnesses to think there were more than that?

Matt Zapotosky: Law enforcement officials have said repeatedly that Mateen was the only shooter, and Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer reiterated that point this morning. Dyer said some witnesses might be confused because of the volume of gunshots they heard or saw.

Mark Berman: During and after many shooting rampages, there are often conflicting accounts about the number of shooters. Part of this is because things are chaotic and terrifying, and eyewitnesses are often recounting what they saw while running for their lives. People also often see and hear

gunfire in different locations during shooting rampages, making these witnesses and the police who are responding unsure if it's the same shooter moving around or multiple people. (It is almost always a lone shooter, according to FBI research.)

The Orlando police have said there was only one shooter here, and while they have not offered evidence, investigators so far have said nothing about any evidence any other people were involved.

A follow-up: If there was only one shooter, why was it so difficult for people to escape? There were several exits, he couldn't have blocked all of them.

Zapotosky: Police and the FBI have yet to provide a thorough accounting of this, though they're expected to give more information [in coming days]. I talked to one witness who said a number of people did escape, though it was a chaotic herd in which getting around was difficult. Another witness I talked to said he stayed underneath a table voluntarily, fearful that an escape attempt might lead to his demise.



An FBI agent examines the damaged rear wall of the Pulse nightclub. Police punched holes through the walls to allow people hiding in bathrooms to escape. (Joe Raedle/Getty Images)

The club must have had armed security guards and CCTV cameras. Why didn't security stop Mateen? And where are those videos?

Zapotosky: An Orlando police officer working as a security guard in uniform at the club was the first to encounter and exchange fire with Mateen. It is unclear — at least to me — what other security the club had, and what level of weaponry they possessed. Asked about security footage at a briefing earlier, Orlando Police Chief John Mina said it was uncertain as to whether it existed or what it showed.

Recently, a website called the Tribunist posted a story titled "When You Hear Someone Call an AR-15 an Assault Rifle, Show Them This." It claims the gun is not technically an assault rifle because it's only semiautomatic, and that the media has grossly exaggerated both how many rounds it can fire and how large its ammunition is. (Mateen used a Sig Sauer MCX, which is similar to the AR-15.) The story's getting a lot of Facebook action.

***Are* the AR-15 and other rifles like it assault rifles? And how dangerous are they?**

Christopher Ingraham: Strictly speaking, the only "true" assault rifles are rifles capable of automatic fire — they shoot continuously when you hold down the trigger. Those rifles have not been available for civilian use since 1986. The civilian versions of the AR-15, and other military-style rifles like it, are only capable of semiautomatic fire: when you pull the trigger, a single bullet is fired.

[Everything you need to know about the gun used in the Orlando shooting]

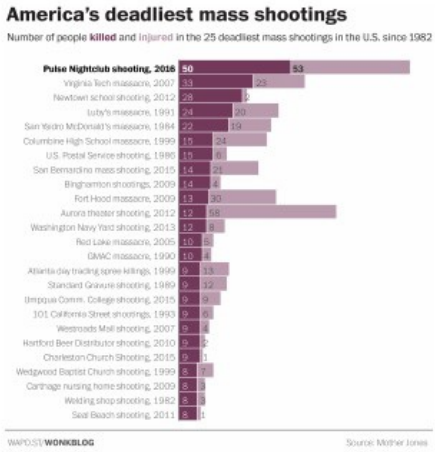
In all other respects, the guns are identical. They fire the same bullets, at the same velocity. Their magazines hold the same number of rounds. For this reason, the term "assault rifle" is often used to

describe all military-style semiautomatic or automatic rifles by researchers, lawmakers, pollsters and the general public.

Gun control advocates dislike this imprecision, preferring to use terms like “modern sporting rifle” to describe the civilian AR-15 and its cousins. But they are likely fighting a fruitless uphill battle: military-style semiautomatic rifles have been popularly known as “assault rifles” at least since the days of the federal assault weapons ban in 1994, and that doesn’t appear to be changing.

Lots of people have also questioned the designation of the Orlando attacks as the “deadliest mass shooting in U.S. history.” They point to incidents like the 1890 massacre at Wounded Knee, where at least 150 Sioux people died. Why are we describing it this way given that history?

Lori Montgomery: The modern definition of “mass shooting” is more than four people killed in a single incident by a criminal gunman (or, rarely, gunmen or gunwomen). Wounded Knee was a military action. When we call Orlando the worst, here’s the list we’re referring to:



Early on Tuesday, a police officer stands guard at a road block near the scene of the mass shooting at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando. (David Goldman/AP) An FBI agent examines the damaged rear wall of the Pulse nightclub. Police punched holes through the walls to allow people hiding in bathrooms to escape. (Joe Raedle/Getty Images) Staff wait with stretchers at the emergency entrance to Orlando Regional Medical Center on Sunday. (Phelan M. Ebenhack/AP)

There are obviously a lot of questions remaining about Mateen’s motivations and the shooter himself: Among other things, social media users have speculated that Mateen was gay because there’s a screenshot going around that appears to show his profile on a site called Jack’d. Was Mateen on Jack’d? Was he gay? What do we know for sure at this point, if anything?

Zapotosky: We don’t know definitive answers to those questions. The FBI is exploring the claims that have been made publicly about Mateen and dating apps.

[Orlando gunman had been seen on gay dating apps, at Pulse nightclub before shooting]

Abby Ohlheiser: And as far as Jack’d is concerned, the story is not yet clear-cut. A spokesperson for the dating app told us that they had no definitive confirmation that Mateen had a profile on their site, although it is possible that he used the app anonymously. There’s also some pretty good evidence that, whether Mateen was on the app or not, a screenshot floating around that appears to show his profile on Jack’d is a hoax.

According to Jack’d, whoever took the screenshot showing Mateen’s alleged presence on Jack’d was viewing a photograph that they’d uploaded to the app themselves, and not one that was received from another user. “The reason we can tell it’s not a screenshot of someone else’s profile,” Kevin Letourneau, spokesperson for Jack’d, told us “is there would be a report button visible.” In the screenshot, provided to The Post and other media outlets, there’s no “report” button at all.

An April 6 YouTube video of the Iranian imam Sheikh Farrokh Sekaleshfar speaking at the Husseini Islamic Center in Sanford, Fla., has gone hugely viral this week, earning more than

2 million views in just a couple days. In the video, Sekaleshfar says that killing gay people is a "compassionate" thing to do.

How representative is that of the Muslim view in general? Is there anything to suggest a connection between Mateen and the Sanford Islamic Center, besides their religion?

Michelle Boorstein: It's unlikely that the Afghan American assassin was a member at an Iranian mosque. Muslims are the most racially and culturally diverse U.S. faith group, and often mosques are made up of Muslims from similar regions/sects.

Islam's teachings against gay relationships are not significantly different from those of other large faith groups, such as Christianity. However, outside the United States, Muslims tend to be likely to embrace traditional views against gay equality, and many in the relatively small U.S. Muslim population tend to be just a generation or few from immigrating. Thus a 2015 Pew poll showed U.S. Muslims among the least accepting — 45 percent said homosexuality should be accepted by society. This was far lower than Catholics, Jews, atheists and mainline Protestants, but higher than evangelicals and Mormons (36 percent) and similar to historically black denominations (51 percent).

[Orlando shootings highlight debate about acceptance of LGBT people in Islam]

The scripture of Islam, like that of all faiths, contains complex and contradictory passages, and is interpreted differently by Muslims everywhere. It also, like other faiths, doesn't describe marriage-like relationships, which is why more liberal Muslim scholars push for it to be reinterpreted.

A huge factor in discussing what is "Islam" is that the faith — like Buddhism or Hinduism — in this part of the world has virtually no institutional hierarchy. There is not only no pope but no major accepted institutions or groups (like the Southern Baptist Convention) that can be said to be followed as the true voice or authority in Islam.

(Boorstein adds: Hundreds of top Muslim leaders signed this statement, saying all human beings have the right to safety and security, after the attack.)

There was also a major mass casualty drill in Orlando last October, in which a mock shooter blew himself up and "injured" 100 volunteer actors to help nurses train. Conspiracy theorists *love* casualty drills. Can you explain to the good people of Facebook what relationship this drill had to Sunday's shooting?

Zapotosky: Nothing, so far as I know.

(There really is nothing at all linking the two events, beside the shared city. Details of the October exercise were published very widely.)

Last, and very least: After tragedies like this one, thousands of Internet goons inevitably come out of the woodwork to claim that the whole thing was a hoax. They've said that it's not



Staff wait with stretchers at the emergency entrance to Orlando Regional Medical Center on Sunday. (Phelan M. Ebenhack/AP)

physically possible to reload a semiautomatic rifle as many times as Mateen must've done, and that they're suspicious why there isn't any cellphone footage. Some conspiracy theorists also insist Mateen was working for the CIA or FBI, since he'd had contact with the agency before.

Can you address those individual questions — are there other, more logical explanations? And can you comment on the "false flag" theory more generally?

Ingraham: Do we have accurate info on how many rounds were fired, and in how long of a time period? Regardless, the weapon he had used 30-round magazines. It takes just just a few seconds to swap magazines. Manuals for similar weapons state an effective firing rate of 45 rounds per minute, but if he was just spraying around and didn't care about accuracy, he could have been shooting considerably faster than that — this is allegedly audio of him shooting 24 rounds in 9 seconds.

Zapotosky: There does exist some news footage of the immediate aftermath. I'm no gun expert, but I'm not exactly sure what is meant by it being "physically impossible" to reload a gun more than a certain number of times. Media has interviewed countless law enforcement officials, hospital staffers, witnesses, survivors and victims' family members. Are they all in on the hoax? Paid actors? That's absurd.

Berman: Wait, the conspiracy theorists think that Mateen was working for the FBI? So: The FBI *wanted* him to carry out an attack that would then cast them in a bad light for interviewing him multiple times and failing to stop him … ?

No, the argument is that the FBI recruited him to commit an attack so that President Obama could take everyone's guns afterward.

Joel Achenbach: Classic false flag operation. *[Note: He is being sarcastic.]* Has anyone tied the Voice shooting to the club shooting to the gator attack?

… not that we're aware of, but it's bound to happen.

Caitlin Dewey is The Post's digital culture critic. Follow her on Twitter @caitlindewey or subscribe to her daily newsletter on all things Internet. (tinyletter.com/cdewey)
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Holy Punch! Cyprus Priest Punches Best Man at Wedding

2016-06-13 go.com

http://abcnews.go.com/Weird/wireStory/holy-punch-cyprus-priest-biffs-grooms-backslapping-brother-39814252

- By menelaos hadjicostis, associated press

NICOSIA, Cyprus — Jun 13, 2016, 10:35 AM ET

The best man slapped the groom on the back, which is an old Cypriot wedding custom. The priest punching the best man would be an innovation.

But Cyprus police said Monday they are investigating an allegation that this happened at a wedding over the weekend.

Police say the victim —the groom's 22-year-old brother — was taken to a hospital but wasn't seriously hurt and that his family filed a complaint.

A family member — speaking on condition of anonymity because the investigation is continuing — said the priest had initially gestured with a raised hand for the slapping to cease, then punched the brother in the chest and face when the warning went unheeded.

The family member told The Associated Press that the wedding unraveled during the ceremony's Dance of Isaiah, when the priest, holding the Gospel, led the couple around the altar three times. With the backslapping continuing, the irate priest put the gospel down and unleased on the brother.

"It's a tradition that I don't condone, but that was uncalled for. ... He could have just interrupted the ceremony," said the family member. He said although the priest hastily abandoned the ceremony after the kerfuffle, the couple did receive a marriage certificate.

"The wedding was spoilt after that with many people not showing up for the reception after word spread, but we made the best of it," the family member said.

Bishop of Paphos Georgios backed the priest, whom he hailed as one of the best clerics in his Diocese. He told the state-run Cyprus News Agency that the backslapping custom, dating from Ottoman times, doesn't befit the island's Orthodox Christian traditions.

The bishop said he had instructed priests to interrupt any ceremony where family or guests didn't demonstrate the appropriate respect. He added he would investigate the matter.

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Even horses pass through DUI checkpoints in Jefferson County

denverpost.com

https://www.denverpost.com/2016/06/22/horses-dui-checkpoints-jefferson-county/

Lakewood police Tuesday night posted on Twitter that a pair of equine vehicles showed up at their DUI stop in Golden

By The Denver Post | newsroom@denverpost.com
June 22, 2016 | UPDATED: 16 hours ago

In Jefferson County, even horses have to pass through driving-under-the-influence checkpoints.

Lakewood police Tuesday night posted on Twitter that a pair of equine vehicles showed up at their DUI stop in Golden.

> Even the horse went through the @LakewoodPDCO , @jeffcosheriffco #DUI Checkpoint #Colorado #BackInTime pic.twitter.com/zJ09OpxUfw
>
> — Lakewood Police (@LakewoodPDCO) June 22, 2016

“Well, this was a first for a (DUI) checkpoint,” Lakewood police said on their Twitter account. “But we are in Golden, so maybe we shouldn’t be surprised …”

> Well, this was a first for a #dui checkpoint – but we are in Golden, so maybe we shouldn't be surprised… pic.twitter.com/mZx4UbhB0z
>
> — Lakewood Police (@LakewoodPDCO) June 22, 2016

Back in 2013, a 45-year-old Colorado Springs man was actually arrested on suspicion of drunken horseback riding in Boulder after University of Colorado police interrupted what he claimed was a 600-mile journey from Larkspur to Bryce, Utah, to attend a wedding.

Lakewood police didn’t report any arrests from the horseback rider checks on Tuesday.

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Why are hospital mortality rates higher for weekend admissions?

mnn.com

Jenn Savedge
July 15, 2016, 1:27 p.m.

There is never an ideal time to be admitted to the hospital, but new research suggests that certain days — in particular Saturdays and Sundays — may actually result in more deaths per hospital admissions than the rest of the week. It's called the "weekend effect," and hospitals around the world are struggling with ways to minimize its impact on their patients.

The harmful effect of hospital admission outcomes on the weekend has been well documented in medical papers, with research dating back to as early as 1976. Recent research has supported the theory of the weekend effect and found that the problem is true in hospitals in many developed countries around the world.

A 2015 study reviewed data from nearly 3 million admissions between 2009 and 2012 from hospitals in the United Kingdom, United States, Australia and the Netherlands. In three out of the four countries surveyed, the risk of dying within 30 days was higher for emergency admissions during weekends. It was 20 percent higher in the Netherlands, 8 percent higher in the U.K. and 13 percent higher in the U.S. Interestingly, the Australian hospitals did not seem to have a weekend effect when looking at mortality rates within 30 days of admission, but that effect was there when researchers looked at mortalities that occurred within seven days of admission.

An even more recent study found that the weekend effect may also impact the availability of donor kidneys in the U.S. Researchers found that available kidneys were less likely to be harvested from potential donors over the weekend and more likely to be discarded when they were procured on a Saturday or Sunday.

So if the weekend effect is so clearly documented, what causes it and what are hospital administrators doing to address it?

The problem is that there are likely multiple causes and therefore no one easy solution.

For starters, it's important to point out that patients who are admitted to the hospital over the weekend are more likely to come in as the result of an emergency than those admitted during the week when planned procedures and surgeries take place. Thus, it's likely that they are sicker or in more dire need of care than those admitted during the week. This is the reason that many hospital administrators give to explain the numbers, but there are probably other factors at work as well.

Weekend hospital staff are typically less experienced and specialists are less readily available over the weekends.This is evident by the fact that the patients who require immediate medical intervention, due to diagnoses such as cardiac arrests, strokes, aneurysms or head trauma, all have a greater risk of dying over the weekend than during the week.

And it's only fair to point out that hospitals are not the only places working with less experienced staff over the weekend. Lab work and other tests sent out of the hospital for processing are also more likely to experience a longer turnaround time.

The bottom line is that the weekend effect does seem to exist, and hospitals need to take a closer look at all of its potential causes so that the care their patients receive on the weekend is the same as what they would get during the week.

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Hell-hounds, Hyter Sprites, and god-fearing Mermaids

wordpress.com

https://hauntedpalaceblog.wordpress.com/2016/03/24/hell-hounds-hyter-sprites-and-god-fearing-mermaids/

The Haunted Palace

Hell-hounds, Hyter Sprites, and god-fearing Mermaids

24 *Thursday* Mar 2016

Posted by Lenora

Normal for Norfolk

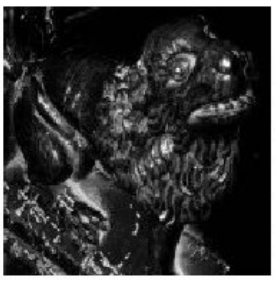


Image from http://www.basilrathbone.net/films/s Abraham Flemming's account of 1577. Taken from http://www.bungay-suffolk.co.uk/bungay/black-dog-legend.asp An unlikely sprite A mermaid's tale

Norfolk is a strange place at the best of times: a famously flat county dotted with windmills, flint cottages and churches; a land of salt-marsh, sea and sky. Perhaps some of its strangeness comes from the fact that over the centuries much of the land was reclaimed from the sea – land which the sea still coverts. A place on the margins of sea and land would seem primed for folk-lore and legends, yet it is not as famous for its folklore as, say, the west country.

Norfolk is densely packed with churches and ruined religious houses, as well as hosting the famous Pilgrimage site at Walsingham. Nevertheless, despite the ubiquity of the church in the county's history and landscape, there are still many strange folk-tales and legends ingrained in the lore of the county. From ominous black dogs, to admonitory sprites and determined mermaids. Here is a very brief journey through some of those tales.

Black Shuck



Black dogs abound in British folk-lore, many counties boast their own version of this phantom hell-hound: Guytrash, Trash and Barghuest are but a few of the names it goes by, depending upon the county or region in question. Even Essex's famous witch village, Canewdon, boasts a ghostly black dog. However, it is Norfolk's lanes, churchyards, salt-marshes and coastal paths, for my mind, which are the natural home of Old Shuck. Historically, the county also had a thriving smuggling trade, and smugglers were not averse to 'encouraging' such beliefs if it made their covert exploits easier to manage by keeping the idle and the curious indoors of a night-time.

Oft described as the size of a calf, this shaggy dog with glowing red saucer eyes, would silently stalk – or even directly confront – the solitary traveler wending his way along a lonely road at dusk. Sometimes Old Shuck drags a chain, sometimes he is headless; occasionally he comes as a guardian or protector, but most often his presence forebodes ill to the witness and legend says that

they, or their kin, will die within a twelve-month.

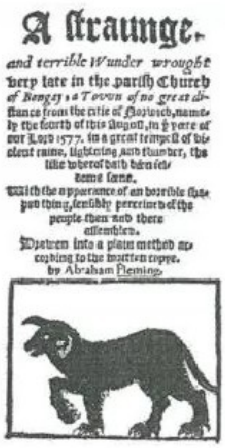


Image from http://www.basilrathbone.net/films/shhound/

'*The Hound of the Baskervilles*' by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, published initially in serial form in The Strand Magazine between 1901-1902, helped introduce the idea of the Phantom Hound to a wider public. Although the story is set on Dartmoor, and is most likely based on a Devonshire legend relating to one Richard Cabell [1], Conan Doyle did stay for a while at Cromer Hall in Norfolk. An estate which encompassed a lane supposedly the haunt of Black Shuck – so there is a slim possibility that this may also have proved some inspiration for his famous story.

The origins of the name have been attributed to the Old English Scucca, meaning Devil or fiend [2] or perhaps a Norfolk dialect word 'shucky' meaning 'shaggy' or 'hairy' [3]. As descriptions often refer to the shaggy nature of this particular cryptid or para-canine (as the author of the very informative Shuckland website prefers to call it), this would seem a fairly logical theory.

Some much has been written on Black Shuck that it is impossible to do justice to the subject in so few words, there are excellent websites out there devoted entirely to Old Shuck. However one cannot avoid presenting the most famous cases of 'Death by Shuck' on record…


A ſtraunge.
and terrible Wunder wrought very late in the parish Church of Bungey ... by the fourth of this August, ... 1577. ... with the appearance of an horrible ſhape ... by Abraham Flemming.

Abraham Flemming's account of 1577. Taken from http://www.bungay-suffolk.co.uk/bungay/black-dog-legend.asp

The Churches at Bungay and Blythburgh in Suffolk, were visited by both a terrifying electrical storm and a terrifying para canine, on the 4 August 1577. Death and destruction followed. The London-based Reverend Abraham Flemming, in his '*A Straunge and Terrible Wunder*' provided the Tabloid version of events, based second-hand tales (which the locals might just have embroidered – a tad – with each re-telling…)

"This black dog, or the divil in such a linenesse (God hee knoweth al who workesth all,) running all along down the body of the church with great swiftnesse, and incredible haste, among the people, in a visible fourm and shape, passed between two persons, as they were kneeling uppon their knees, and occupied in prayer as it seemed, wrung the necks of them bothe at one instant clene backward, in somuch that even at a mome[n]t where they kneeled, they stra[ng]gely dyed." [4]

Another unfortunate parishioner was left horribly burned. Famously, scorch marks were left on the church door and were ever after called 'the devil's fingerprints'.

Later that day the storm, and the Shuck, reached a church at Blythburgh with similarly deadly consequences.

It has been suggested, quite reasonably, that the fierce electrical storm, occurring at the same time as the appearance of the hell-hound, is the most likely reason for all the death and destruction (especially when the burn injuries of the survivors are considered). That, combined with the traumatic religious upheavals of the day, might have led the superstitious people of the parish to

translate such a terrible catastrophe, caused in a church (surely the safest place they could possibly be), to be caused by a malign supernatural agency. [5] It may have made the tragedy easier for them to process.

The interest in Black Shuck persists even now, on a recent visit to Norfolk I picked up an entertaining contemporary supernatural thriller, 'Black Shuck' by Piers Warren. Set in the salt-marshes around Blakeney Point, the novel successfully evokes the strangeness and remoteness of the North Norfolk coastline, creating a perfect setting for Black Shuck. Warren uses a version of the Shuck legend that explains Shuck as the loyal dog of a drowned sea-captain, doomed to spend eternity searching the coastline for his lost master. While his hound isn't entirely sympathetic, and is in fact, very much in need of some serious Barbara Woodhouse treatment, it is one of the alternative explanations of the Black Shuck. To see black dogs as demonic hell-hounds, or manifestations of Old Nick himself is not the whole story. Perhaps Black Shuck is as doomed as those he encounters, perhaps he is just the bearer of bad news and not its cause. It can't be much of an after-life for a loyal hound – becoming a terrifying harbinger of doom.

Hyter Sprites



Image from http://www.basilrathbone.net/films/s Abraham Flemming's account of 1577. Taken from http://www.bungay-suffolk.co.uk/bungay/black-dog-legend.asp An unlikely sprite A mermaid's tale

The most mysterious and elusive Norfolk beastie seems to be that of the Hyter Sprite (also known as hikey, hykry, hikra and ikry sprite)[6]. Rather like Shuck, their name may originate in Old English which contains the word 'hedan', or perhaps, the Saxon word 'Hodian'. Both broadly meaning 'to heed, guard, keep' or to 'take notice'/'give attention too' [7]. This rare sprite is found in Eastern Norfolk and the North Norfolk coast. Most commonly appearing as an admonition to children – *'if you go out on your own after dark, the hyter sprites will get you'* they are associated with nightfall, woodland and marshes. Mostly used to encourage children to be safe and behave, with a mild threat implied that the hikeys will get them if they don't, they do not seem particularly dangerous or foreboding, unlike the often menacing Old Shuck.

They are a creature rarely sighted and with no clear description to fit. The most famous, and likely misleading, description being that given by Dr Katherine Briggs in her 1973 Encyclopaedia of Fairies and based on information provided by Ruth Tongue:

"Hyter Sprites. Lincolnshire and East Anglian fairies. they are small and sandy-coloured with green eyes like the Feriers of Suffolk. The assume the bird form of sandmartins. They are grateful for human kindnesses and stern critics of ill-behaviour [..]the hyter sprites have been known to bring home lost children, like the Ghillie Dhu of the Highlands." [8]

Others have envisioned them as bat-like creatures. But always as protective spirits who warn children from danger and were possessed of had bird-like qualities. However not all descriptions were so favorable, one tale collected by Daniel Allen Rabuzzi during his researches found an alarming description provided by the aged aunt of one informant – the protective little hyter sprite was transformed into *'a spindley-legged light-footed blooksucker'* that haunted the salt-marshes and kept locals safely in their cottages at night….no doubt much to the benefit of local smugglers.

Oddly enough, there is no definitive description of a hyter sprite. In fact, Rabuzzi comments that in comparison the many recorded sightings of the supernatural beastie, Black Shuck, there appeared



An unlikely sprite

to be few if any recorded sightings of hyter sprites. This lead him to the conclusion that they were not in any sense a fully fledged fairy folk tradition, but rather were 'heeder spirits' that represented a 'folk-expression'. Primarily used to admonish children and discourage them from taking risks, rather than creating any real expectation of an actual encounter. A bit like a mildly threatening Easter bunny (and distinctly preferable to spindle-legged blood-suckers, in my mind at least).

The Mermaid of Upper Sheringham

Oddly enough, although considered freakish, mermaids were actually thought to exist within nature, certainly during the medieval period and even beyond (a belief that the showman Barnum famously capitalized on, in the 19th century).

No coastal village would be complete without at least one Mermaids tale… and the



Image from http://www.basilrathbone.net/films/shhound/ Abraham Flemming's account of 1577. Taken from http://www.bungay-suffolk.co.uk/bungay/black-dog-legend.asp An unlikely sprite A mermaid's tale

small fishing village of Sheringham is no different. A mile or so up the hill from the bucket and spade paradise of Sheringham, is the quieter village of Upper Sheringham. In the 14th century village church, All Saints, is the remnant of a very fishy tale indeed.

The pews in the church date from the 15th century, and the bench ends contain many a fantastical beastie, but one in particular draws the visitor, the pew by the north door is adorned with a somewhat stocky and rather burly mermaid. Looking distinctly unsiren-like this mermaid is commemorated with an inscribed tale which goes something like this:



A mermaid's tale

A mermaid decided to visit the parish church at Syringham (Sheringham) and managed to flip and flap her way from the seashore, up the hill to All Saints church in the village of Upper Sheringham. Some say she came seeking a soul, and so, with her goal almost in sight, she pushed open the north door of the church. A service was in progress and the beadle, seeing a slippery siren trying to gain admission, somewhat unchivalrously slammed the door in the unfortunate fish lady's face, exclaiming *'Git ew arn owt, we carn't hev noo marmeards in 'are!'*

Not to be deterred – mermaids may suffer from a bit of a bad reputation at times, but they are descended from an Assyrian goddess after all – the mermaid bided her time, and when a suitable opportunity arose, she pushed open the north door of the church and slithered into the pew at the

back of the church. And here she remains to this day. Whether she gained a soul – or was truly in want of one – nobody knows.

Mermaids, despite their divine ancestry suffered from very bad PR during Christian times, often being used as a symbol of vanity and sexuality, prostitution and earthly vices. It has been suggested that perhaps the little mermaid in All Saints could commemorate an unwelcome visit to the church by a prostitute [9] however appealing this interpretation is, personally I think it is more likely just down to the imagination of the medieval carver – either coloured by local lore or on the order of the parish priest, to illustrate a moral tale.

From the ill-omened supernatural cryptid, Old Shuck, to the pseudo real creatures mermaids, and the heeder spirit folk-expression that is the hyter sprite, Norfolk would seem as rich in folk traditions as it is in medieval churches.



Image from http://www.basilrathbone.net/films/shhound/ Abraham Flemming's account of 1577. Taken from http://www.bungay-suffolk.co.uk/bungay/black-dog-legend.asp An unlikely sprite A mermaid's tale

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4 thoughts on "Hell-hounds, Hyter Sprites, and god-fearing Mermaids"

1. angryscholar*said:*

March 29, 2016 at 9:03 am

Hey Lenora, great post. Your writing always makes me want to visit these places. I really hope I can explore England sometime soon. I spent months in Ireland but was only in the UK for a few days, to my great regret.

Some friends and I had a black dog experience in the West of Ireland, though. We were tramping around the hills in Connacht one night and came to a sort of flat area on the side of a mountain. Later the three of us all agreed we saw a black dog sitting there in front of us. I stopped walking and as I watched, I thought the thing stood up and took a step toward us. I turned to tell the others we should leave, and they were already off down the mountain!

Needless to say I beat a hasty retreat too. When I went back to the spot the next day, there was a clump of grass right where we'd seen the dog. Whether it was or it wasn't, I can't say. Fortunately, nobody died–and that was nearly thirteen years ago now.

- Lenora*said:*

  March 30, 2016 at 11:13 am

  Hey there, so glad you enjoyed the post. It's so hard at the moment to get time! You should definitely visit England: I am (obviously) biased towards Norfolk and Northumberland, but there is so much history and folklore everywhere, you would have a blast.

  Sounds like you had a close call with Old Shuck there – maybe he was in a good mood that night ;0)

2. Miss_Jessel*said:*

March 29, 2016 at 4:24 pm

A really enjoyable read. I do hope the mermaid did get her soul. I just love the interesting carvings in churches and cathedrals which have become part of folklore such as the famous Lincoln Imp.

- Lenora*said:*

  March 30, 2016 at 11:14 am

  Thanks Miss J, there are a plethora of Medieval churches in Norfolk, and an abundance of amazing carvings. You can find some very weird beasties on a day out in Norfolk

Create a free website or blog at WordPress.com. The Chateau Theme .

China Plans Housing For 3.4 Billion People

By Douglas A. McIntyre
July 17, 2016 9:55 am EDT

247wallst.com

China's current population is 1.4 billion. The government is planning well in advance for the growth of its residents, and perhaps too far. The Xinhua News Agency reports the People's Republic hopes to building housing for 3.4 billion people, which is more than the populations of India and China combined.

By 2030, the towns built to accommodate these people will total 3,500, according to a Google Translate version of the Xinhua News Agency article.

The article shows that some experts believe the building will be over-built because there will not be enough people

Translation

> State Council Development Research Center researcher Zuo Jun, said: "At present, China household population urbanization rate of 39.9%, but also to improve the next five percentage points, equivalent to 100 million people in towns, the task is arduous."
>
> However, "Xinhua Viewpoint" reporter survey found that, compared to this difficult task, some places put forward more ambitious objectives. National Development and Reform Commission reform and development of cities and small towns in the center of the survey, according to incomplete statistics, as of May 2016, the number of the county and the county more than 3,500 Metro Area. According to the survey of the Centre had released, these new city district plan population reached 3.4 billion.
>
> Research on the National Development and Reform Commission reform and development of small towns and urban centers showed more than 3,500 Metro, the National District 17; all kinds of state-level economic and technological development zones, high-tech zones, fully protected areas, border economic cooperation zones, export processing areas, tourist resorts, etc. about 500; a plurality of various types of provincial industrial park 1600; large-scale industrial park in the city of 1000; the county the following types of industrial park of millions.
>
> "Planning 3.4 billion population, China is currently equivalent to about 2.5 times the size of the population, enough to hold about half of the world's population under." President of the South China Institute of City Planning, Professor of Management College of Jinan University, Hu Gang said that this plan is clearly unrealistic.
>
> National School of Administration, said Wang Yukai, the baby boom of the Chinese population has been in the past, even if the full liberalization of the second child, the population growth rate will not rise sharply, the main town of the incremental transfer of population from rural to town. Consider the wishes of the city, settled in capacity and other factors, no matter how calculated, and 3.4 billion people filled up "pit."
>
> "The important task is to get people."
>
> How to implement population planning? West, southwest and city planning several

department heads in an interview with reporters, he said, “We have an important task is to get people.” In addition to the transfer of the rural population into the city, the population of some cities also introduced targets to focus on regional and urban migration on.

China Regional Science Research Council chairman, Nankai University professor Spatial Transition and other experts interviewed said that the size of the urban population has clearly differentiated control signal, strictly control the size of the population of mega-cities, small cities to speed up the liberalization of settled system. With the population of megacities “overflow” of small towns and small cities, it may usher in big cities to undertake the transfer of part of the population positive.

However, in reality, people gather to play the important task of medium and small cities are facing the embarrassment. Recently published “National new urbanization Report 2015” shows that Chinese migrant workers flow above the level of more than 70%, the flow of the small town of less than 10%.

By Douglas A. McIntyre

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Hunting Little Souls: The Vampires of Religious Instruction - New Matilda

newmatilda.com

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New Matilda

Hunting Little Souls: The Vampires of Religious Instruction



Bella Swan, from the Twilight series.

By Hugh Harrison June 21, 2016

The religious right have had plenty of say on Safe Schools. Their response is strangely muted when it comes to religious instruction that teaches kids about sex and vampires. Hugh Harris explains.

"These books are about vampires", begins the Connect religious instruction lesson for seven to nine year old children, introducing the well-known "Twilight" series of vampire novels, well known for their blend of eroticism and horror.

Recommended for ages 13 and over, the series follows the trials of Bella Swan, who falls in love with the pale but good-looking vampire, Edward Cullen. It tells of his struggle to resist the strong sexual desire aroused by the scent of Bella's blood, and his choice to protect her from a coven of evil vampires.

"Some of your older brothers and sisters, or even your parents, may have read these books," the lesson continues.

The Connect religious instruction (RI) program is produced by the Sydney Anglican group Youthworks, and is widely used in NSW and QLD.

"Who can tell me what they think a vampire is?" the class are asked.

"In these made-up stories about vampires how do you think someone becomes a scary vampire?"

"Accept responses. A vampire bites them and drinks their blood, the person dies and then the person comes to life again but this time they are not a person, they are a vampire".

The Christian fascination with the vampire myth relates to the inversion of the communion sacrament. The human immortality resulting from drinking the blood of Christ is contrasted with the immortality of drinking human blood and belonging to a fallen, demonic world.

Twilight's author, Stephenie Meyer uses her Mormon faith to infuse the series with themes of sexual abstinence, evil, and immortality.

"There aren't any vampires in the Bible because the Bible is not a made-up book – it is a book



Stephenie Meyer, author of the Twilight series.

containing facts", the Connect lesson continues.

"But there are some true stories in the Bible about people dying and then coming back to life again and we're going to look at one now".

Evidently, the point of the lesson is to emphasize the authority of the Bible. A fundamentalist adherence to the literal truth of scripture is a key element of Connect: "To understand that the Bible is God's word: that it is historically reliable and still relevant today."

The program emphasizes the literal truth of familiar Bible stories such as Adam and Eve, and Noah's Ark. Connect refers to the story of Jesus turning water into wine as: "a true story…Jesus really did this; it wasn't a magic trick."

The authors apparently have no scruples with using violent and age inappropriate material to generate interest in the Bible.

Recent media reports have highlighted lessons threatening children they "will die" if they're selfish, and asking them to roleplay the beheading in the David and Goliath story. Young children are denigrated as "sinners" deserving of punishment, and compared to dirty towels in need of cleansing.

The grisly material stands at odds with the protests of conservative religious groups about violent and pornographic material in video games and movies.

But the gravest concern is the contest for children's souls – the explicit focus of the Youthworks Connect RI program.

Youthworks' own website says that "the discipleship of children, youth and families is at the heart of everything we do."

Making disciples "is why we exist", they say.

Queensland RI policy prohibits proselytising, defined as "soliciting a student for a decision to change their religious affiliation".

Windsor State School banned the Connect program for "soliciting children to develop a personal faith in God and Jesus and become a Christian or 'Kingdom Kid'."

The Connect program acknowledges that most students "are not yet Christians", and piles on the entreaties to join the Christian faith, to become a Christian "Kingdom kid", to "follow Jesus", "be friends with Jesus", and to have "faith in Jesus". Children are even encouraged to tell their friends about "why they want them to know Jesus".

Nicky Ross, CEO of Christian Religious Education Sunshine Coast, admits the Connect program proselytises:

"We are very aware statements made in the curriculum DO proselytise, but the Education Act is specific not to do this and to make sure we are only educating children about the Christian faith."

Tellingly, Youthworks have obtained a legal opinion from Brisbane Barrister Stewart Webster, that the prohibition on proselytising applies only to attempting to change a person's religious denomination.

Youthworks have forwarded the legal opinion to Education Minister Kate Jones, suggesting that they intend to enforce their perceived legal right to proselytise to non-Christian children.

While reviews into religious instruction continue, the respective State governments of Queensland and New South Wales must decide whether to allow the continued use of proselytising and age-inappropriate instruction material.

No action constitutes tacit approval for menacing youngsters with threats, belittling, damnation, and gruesome stories; and of transforming the classroom into a mission field for disciple making.

Vampires seeking to claim the souls of innocents is a ghastly, nightmarish thought: one that should frighten parents and children alike.

Hugh Harris

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'Terrifying Warning' About Ice Cream Trucks and Chloroform

snopes.com

A viral social media post

snopes

claimed that young girls were being drugged with chloroform by ice cream trucks, but the rumor appeared to be baseless.

Kim LaCapria



Claim: Mothers of girls should be on the lookout for ice cream trucks (specifically Mr. Softee branded ones) as reports of chloroform kidnappings have surfaced.

Mostly False

WHAT'S TRUE: In April 2016, an "overly affectionate" woman and a male companion were cited for operating an unlicensed ice cream truck and seat belt violations in Kansas City, Missouri.

WHAT'S FALSE: Police confirmed the duo were not kidnappers nor attempted abductors; the incident was the only one we could locate involving questionable ice cream trucks; we found no reports of chloroform-wielding Mr. Softee drivers.

Example: [*Collected via e-mail and Facebook, June 2016*]

Origin:On 10 June 2016, the Facebook pages "Trending Styles" and "Stylish Guru" published links to a "terrifying warning to all mothers of girls". The linked page claimed people driving ice cream trucks are attempting to kidnap children using chloroform:

> Cases are being reported daily that its happening only to girls and that the Ice-cream truck has attempted to kidnap some girls but has failed due to the amount of people around. Chloroform is an organic compound with formula CHCl3. It is a colorless, sweet-smelling, dense liquid. It has been used before as a kidnapping agent where the criminal



terrifying warning for all mothers of girls this summer

puts the cloth over its victims face and the person will then pass out. By using it in ice-cream it works 10 times faster and the girl is subject to being injured very badly due to falling and hitting her head. The ice-cream trucks that were reported to the police were said to have the writing " Mr Ice Cream Man " and another reported was " Mr Softy ".

Parents are advised to be with their children if they want to give them ice-cream as this is a very serious matter storming your area this summer. Please SHARE this with your friends and family and make sure it does not happen to you. Police are working on the matter to try and catch the perpetrators.

The rumor lacked any evidence that any such thing had ever happened, much less was a daily occurrence. It also lacked dates, places, police departments involved, the origin of the warning, and links to news where such an act occurred. According to the rumor, ice cream truck drivers had attempted to kidnap "some girls" but failed because the "amount of people around" (also known as witnesses) prevented it.

We looked for even one instance of a Mr. Softee truck targeting young girls with chloroform, but came up short. The image used to illustrate the post almost certainly didn't involve a Softee victim to the left, and the photograph to the right was a popular European stock image of an ice cream truck (unrelated to kidnappings or chloroform).

In April 2016, a single incident involving an unlicensed ice cream truck made headlines in Kansas City, Missouri. On 4 April 2016, the outlet WDAF-TV reported on a mother's concern that an ice cream truck driver planned (not attempted) to kidnap her child:

> [Parent Rebecca]Gleason said she was in her kitchen and a neighbor was keeping an eye on several kids, including her two little ones, as they played in the yard.
>
> That's when her son came inside to say a woman was offering his 4-year-old sister free ice cream.
>
> "Free anything out of a van is just not okay," Gleason said. "So I immediately knew that that wasn`t right and I darted out my front door and there was a woman outside of this ice cream truck within arm's reach, trying to grab my daughter, saying 'Oh baby, come here. Come here,' in a very uncomfortable, awkward way."

A 7 April 2016, a follow-up piece from the same outlet reported that police located the individuals operating the ice cream truck, and cited them for lacking a business license and seat belt violations (not kidnapping):

> After FOX 4's first story aired, police were tracked down the people inside the truck and took them to jail. Kansas City police arrested Steven Buckle and Lana Moore, calling them "possible burglary suspects."

> But they were later released and now just face municipal charges for operating a business without a license, unlawful riding and seat belt violations.

The Kansas City Police Department told us that the truck's owners were not suspected in any attempted abductions. The police department representative described the female suspect as "affectionate," but neither dangerous nor suspected of being a potential kidnapper.

The ice cream truck/chloroform rumor wasn't the first story spread by the multitude of "Stylish" or "Trending" pages on Facebook. In June 2015, a similar page spread baseless rumors of Facebook scouting by kidnappers. Summer frequently ushers in an uptick of kidnap warnings on social media, many of which lead to additional reports based solely on escalating fears of abduction (but not an actual elevated risk).

Last updated: 10 June 2016



Banks, Katie. "Northland Mom Says Strange Woman Offering Free Ice Cream To Kids Causes Alarm."
WDAF-TV. 4 April 2016.

Banks, Katie. "Suspicious Duo In Ice Cream Truck Face Charge Of Operating A Business Without A License."
WDAF-TV. 7 April 2016.

Urban Legends Reference Pages © 1995-2016 by snopes.com

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Iceland Is Officially Worshiping Norse Gods Again

by Orion Jones January 24, 2016

bigthink.com



For the first time since the Vikings sailed, the Icelandic public are worshiping classical Norse gods like Odin, Thor, and Frigg at a public temple built in their honor. "The worship of Odin, Thor, Freya and the other gods of the old Norse pantheon became an officially recognized religion exactly 973 years after Iceland's official conversion to Christianity."

An Icelandic association called Asatruarfelagid, which promotes faith in the Norse gods and is headed by high-priest Hilmar Orn Hilmarsson, raised sufficient funds and received permission from the government to construct the first such temple in 1,000 years. Observers wonder how the rise of neo-pagan traditions will affect the reception of Christianity.

Professor Luke Timothy Johnson of Emory University says early Christians frequently misinterpreted virtuous gods as demons:

"Christian mission has always positioned itself as a rescue operation, that people were in desperate straits, were indeed under the influence of demons. ... It is impossible to read the reflections of Marcus Aurelius ... and not recognize a profound mode of religious expression. ... It is impossible ... not to recognize that [paganism] is the furthest thing possible from the demonic. It is indeed a form of religious expression from which we can learn much, and at the very least we need to respect."

Iceland's Norse temple will host official ceremonies like weddings and funerals and be dug 13 feet down into a hill that overlooks Iceland's capital, Reykjavik. Hilmarsson said his organization's purpose is not to dispute any Christian traditions, but simply reflect Iceland's complex spiritual history.

Hilmarsson said: "I don't believe anyone believes in a one-eyed man who is riding about on a horse with eight feet. We see the stories as poetic metaphors and a manifestation of the forces of nature and human psychology." Membership in Asatruarfelagid has tripled in Iceland to 2,400 members, out of a total population of 330,000.

Read more at *The Telegraph*.

Photo credit: Shutterstock

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Indian police: Couple killed for 22-cent debt

By Sugam Pokharel and James Masters, CNN Updated 7:32 PM ET, Fri July 29, 2016
2016-07-29T23:32:46Z

cnn.com

Story highlights

- A grocer hacked to death a Dalit couple in northern India, police say
- A spokesman says the couple owed the shopkeeper 15 rupees (22 cents)

New Delhi (CNN)A man was beheaded and his wife hacked to death after a disagreement with a grocer, according to authorities in India.

The killings took place in the Mainpuri district of the northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh Thursday, following an argument earlier that day.

The couple, who belonged to the lowest rung of India's caste hierarchy, had owed upper-caste shopkeeper Ashok Mishra 15 rupees (22 U.S. cents) but said they were unable to pay back the money, authorities said.

According to police, eyewitnesses said the couple, who were referred to as Bharat and Mamta, had told Mishra they would pay back their debt at the end of the day, once they had received their wages as laborers.

After a heated argument about 6 a.m. local time, as the couple headed to work in nearby fields, police say Mishra went home, grabbed an ax, and attacked the couple. Both died.



<img alt="Life in India's lowest caste" class="media__image" src="http://i2.cdn.turner.com/cnnnext/dam/assets/160725(india-lower-caste-udas-00005829-large-169.jpg">

Life in India's lowest caste

"It is not clear yet if the shopkeeper had some previous vengeance against the couple," said Digambar Kushwaha, a local police official.

"The attacker has confessed his crime to the police. The role of shopkeeper's wife in this incident is not clear yet. We are investigating.

"We are also probing some eyewitnesses to find out why no one tried to stop the shopkeeper."



<img alt="India: Women, class, and discrimination" class="media__image" src="http://i2.cdn.turner.com/cnnnext/dam/assets/160724.india-dalit-women-caste-sumina-udas-pkg-00005210-large-169.jpg">

India: Women, class, and discrimination

Kushwaha said the shopkeeper told police that the couple had verbally abused him.

The attacker and his wife have both been arrested and the weapon used in the attack recovered, he said.

Bharat and Mamta leave behind four children -- three of them minors, according to authorities.

The Dalit community in the village has blocked roads and protested over the incident.
Dalits, as India's lowest caste, have long been vulnerable to discrimination and acts of violence. The caste system is officially abolished in India but social hierarchies often contribute to crime and atrocities across the country.

Sugam Pokharel reported from New Delhi and James Masters wrote from London. Ravi Agrawal contributed to this report.

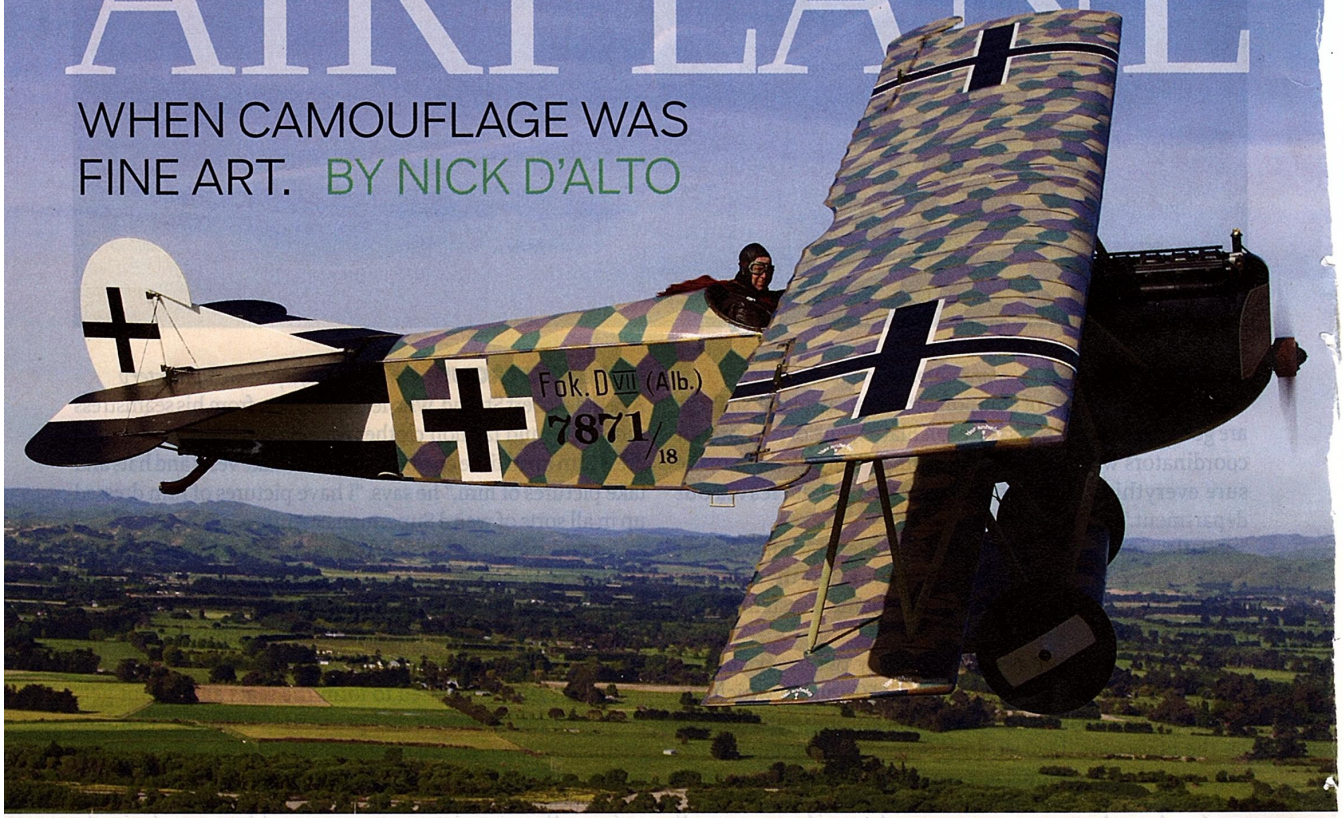
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INVENTING THE INVISIBLE AIRPLANE

WHEN CAMOUFLAGE WAS FINE ART.

BY NICK D'ALTO



IN HER 1917 PATENT APPLICATION, Mary "Mitty" Taylor Brush claimed that with her invention she was "able to produce a machine which is practically invisible when in the air." Mitty and her husband, renowned artist George de Forest Brush, believed they could use ideas developed in paintings to create camouflage for aircraft. George first developed a skill for these techniques from his friend Abbott Thayer, a painter who had tried to get the U.S. Navy to adopt his ideas for concealing ships during the Spanish-American War. In 1916, when it appeared imminent the United States would enter the war, George bought a Morane-Borel monoplane to experiment with, and soon his pioneering wife, trained as a pilot, applied her genius and flying skills to further his work. Call it the art of war.

"Early in World War I, it was the French army that established history's first dedicated camouflage unit," says Roy R. Behrens, a professor of graphic design at the University of Northern Iowa who has

written several books on the history of camouflage. "That unit comprised soldiers who in their civilian lives had worked in art-related professions, such as painting, illustration, graphic design, architecture, theatrical set design, and so on." Other countries followed suit, with the United States creating the 40th Regiment of the Corps of Engineers (Camouflage) in 1917—though only after a private society of civilian artists, including Lincoln Memorial architect Daniel Chester French, published an article insisting the War Department accept their services. In addition to shrouding gun emplacements and concealing battleships, the men of the regiment began to apply their artistic styles to making aircraft more difficult to spot. The result: World War I aircraft sporting some unusual livery.

Seen up close, the wings of an Albatross D.Va appear garish, covered in a pattern of large, multicolored, misshapen dots called lozenges. This camouflage was inspired by pointillism, an Impressionist technique in which neighboring bits of color appear to blend with one another as the viewer moves away from the image. The effect would make a patrolling Albatross recede into the surrounding sky, says Behrens.

In 1916, when a German infantryman named Paul Klee turned out to be a highly skilled artist, his sergeant shipped him off to Oberschleissheim air field, near Munich, to paint repaired aircraft. Klee and his crew traveled around the region by train to collect crashed and otherwise broken aircraft and paint lozenge patterns on them. Many of these aircraft looked like Klee's fine art pieces. Writing in his diary during the war about his personal work, which he continued to produce, he seemed affected by the camouflage nature of his creations: "Everything vanishes around me, and works are born as if out of the void. Ripe, graphic fruits fall off."

On the Allied side of Europe, British illustrator Norman Wilkinson developed a scheme he called dazzle camouflage for ships, which was quickly adopted for ground vehicles and aircraft. Pablo Picasso is said to have recognized the style immediately, according to the biography Gertrude Stein wrote about her friend. She describes a day when the two stood together in Paris at the beginning of the war. As camouflaged trucks drove by on their way to the front, he cried, "Yes, it is we who made it, that is Cubism!"

Behrens is more skeptical of the direct influence of the Modernist art style: "The artists who first studied camouflage were largely academically trained, and in some cases—Abbott Thayer in particular—were far more influenced by examples of camouflage in nature." Whatever the origin, dazzle camouflage certainly harnessed similar effects of Cubism, in which strong, geometric shapes around a known form make the eye skitter. On aircraft such as the Felixstowe F.2A seaplanes, bizarre colorations in stripes and zigzags borrowed this artistic style to create confusion (see photo, bottom of p. 30). Instead of concealing an aircraft, the dizzying patterns made it difficult for gunners to get a lock on its distance and heading. Oddly enough, the graphics often helped by making the aircraft *more*



The Brush family made unique contributions to early aviation. George used his artistic skill to develop camouflage paint schemes that would reduce the appearance of an aircraft's size in flight. His wife Mary (above, in a portrait by George) was a pilot. She invented lighting and mechanical methods to make an airplane disappear against the sky.



Pointillism, used by artist Georges Seurat, inspired camouflage for World War I aircraft, like the Fokker D.VII (opposite).

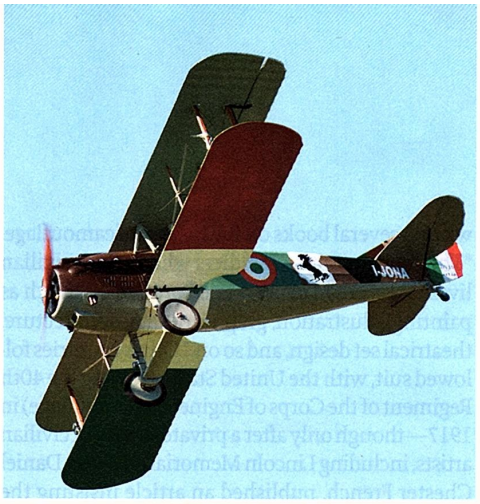


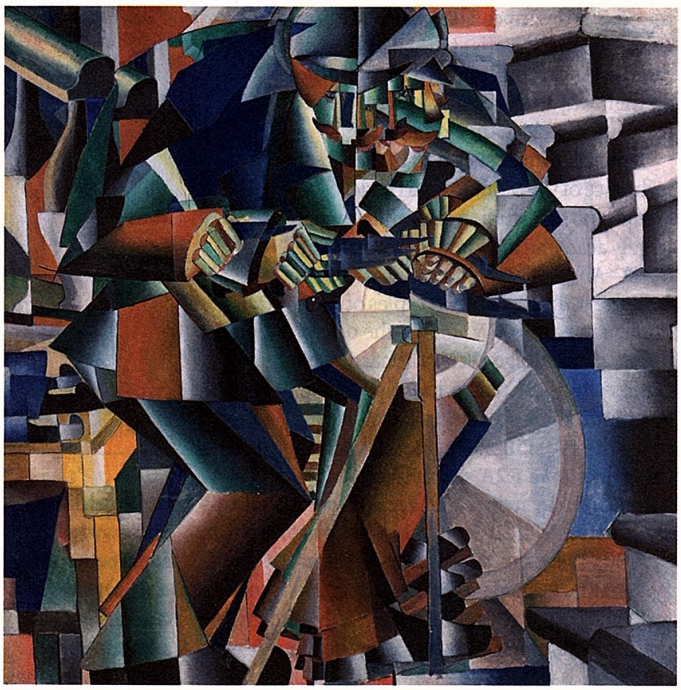
OPPOSITE: GAVIN CONROY; TOP RIGHT AND RIGHT: COURTESY MET FIFTH AVENUE (2)

Nature inspired one early aircraft camouflage style: A light color on the underside (right, on a SPAD), like the belly of a grouse (right, below), makes the object harder to see.

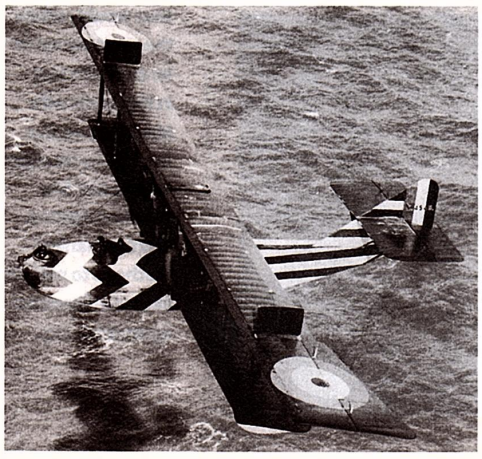
visible; since fellow pilots could easily identify the strange markings, friendly fire was reduced, and sea rescuers had an easier time finding downed Felixes.

The method that Brush and Thayer advocated, meanwhile, was countershading, something they observed in the animal kingdom. Usually, the sun shining on an object below creates a shadow underneath, which gives definition to the object and makes it easier to see. Many prey species, such as deer, have light-colored underbellies, which creates an illusion







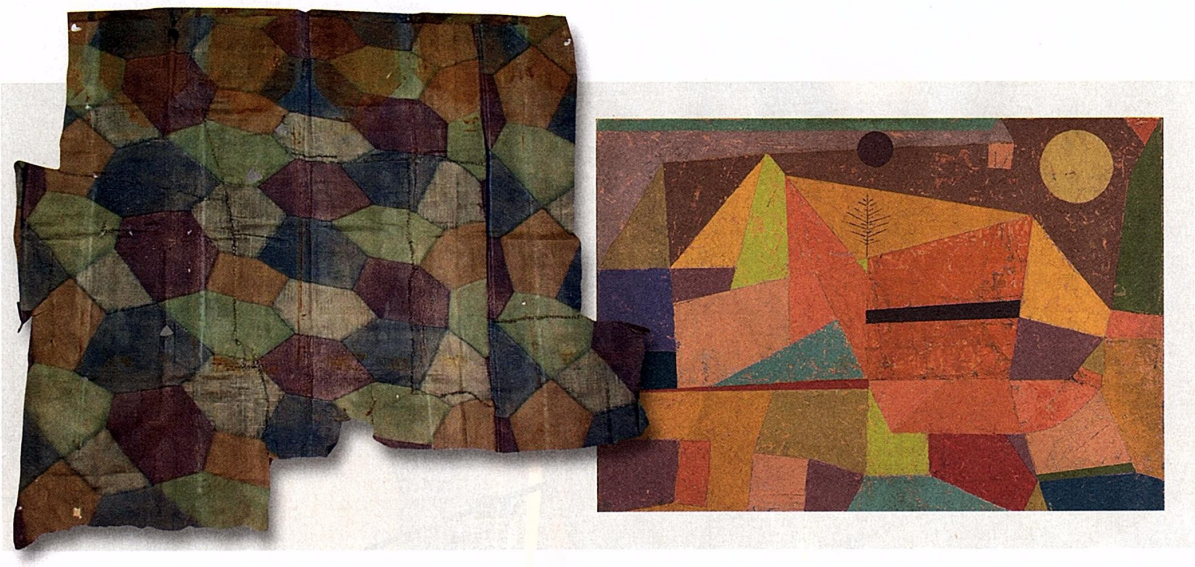


The Cubist style in paintings like *The Knifegrinder* (above), by Kazimir Malevich, was the inspiration for "dazzle" camouflage. The bold patterns, such as the scheme on the Felixstowe at left, muddled the aircraft in the viewer's sight, making it difficult to shoot at.

that diffuses the shadow to anyone looking at it. This makes the prey appear more flat than three-dimensional, and less obvious to a predator. Thayer and his son Gerald captured this effect hauntingly in their nature paintings. Similarly, aircraft with lighter undersides should also flatten, when viewed at altitude by enemy aircraft.

While working on the family monoplane, George and Mitty experimented with a related but slightly different technique called counter-illumination. The idea was to make the aircraft as bright as the surrounding sky—in effect, it would be transparent. George's first attempts were to apply varnished silk to the wings. "While this gave a nearly 'invisible' effect, the material (it was before the day of plastics) did not prove sufficiently durable," explained his daughter Nancy Douglas Bowditch in her biography about her father's artistic pursuits. Mitty tried punching holes through the linen wings to let light from above pass through and, as she wrote in her patent, "become diffused and practically obliterate all contrasts of light and shade on adjacent surfaces." She also positioned lights inside the aircraft and on the fuselage to further illuminate the parts that functioned better

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: ELIZABETTA PUGGIONI; COURTESY THE MET/ROGERS FUND 1916; COURTESY SEAWINGS; COURTESY YALE UNIV. ART GALLERY



without holes. She often tested the experiments by flying her "invisible" airplane around their Long Island and New Hampshire homes.

Though the counter-illumination inventions Mitty patented were never put into production, the spirit of the idea was reborn during World War II. A now-declassified 1946 report by the National Defense Research Committee explains that trials were conducted in which lights were attached to a B-24 Liberator's nose and its wing's leading edge to reduce its head-on visibility, after determining that the amount of power to light up the entire underside of an aircraft would be prohibitive. Though the Yehudi (slang for "the little man who wasn't there," according to the report) camouflage proved successful in the tests, radar and stealth technology advanced so quickly that the technique never made it into practical use.

As World War II began, a new generation of camofluers were recruited, with artists like Color School abstract painter Ellsworth Kelly influencing techniques. Kelly was a member of a U.S. Army tactical deception unit called The Ghost Army. Grumman Hellcats and German Messerschmitts flew and fought in the skies, using updated versions of Thayer's countershading system.

As for Mitty's invisible airplane, it recently reappeared. In 2011, a tattered wing, the seat, the landing gear, and the suspension wires were discovered in a barn in New Hampshire. The pieces are now exhibited at Pennsylvania's Eagles Mere Air Museum. However, no photos showing Mitty's stealthy test flights have ever shown up. Perhaps the disappearing act worked too well.

German infantryman and soon-to-be-famous artist Paul Klee painted aircraft wings with schemes that looked like fine art. Klee painted *Medieval Town* in 1915, the year before he was conscripted.



In 2011, the remains of Mary Brush's Morane-Borel monoplane were discovered in a New Hampshire barn. "It was a mind-boggling exercise to extract it," says George Jenkins, owner of the Eagles Mere Air Museum. "Given it had been there for 90 years, the mice had been kind to it."

TOP RIGHT: COURTESY ROBERT KARR VIA THE AERODROME; TOP FAR RIGHT: COURTESY YALE UNIV. ART GALLERY; BOTTOM: DANIEL BEKEK

Plant hallucinogens as magical medicines

"Were such things here as we do speak about?
Or have we eaten on the insane root
That takes the reason prisoner?"

Shakespeare, Macbeth I.iii



Public domain image; image source: Wikimedia Commons

Johannes Praetorius: Witches' Sabbath (Blockes-Berges Verrichtung), Leipzig, 1668

Thus wonders Banquo, who witnessed, together with Macbeth, the witches' sabbath and the first foretelling of their future at the beginning of Shakespeare's play. The apparitions were either true – or a hallucination. By giving these two options in 1606, at the height of the witch-hunt in Europe, Shakespeare not only provides a reasonable interpretation of the state of bewitchment, i.e. of delirious dreams, but also points to a possible cause of this insanity. There are poisonous plants that, upon contact or ingestion, cloud our mind and make us experience unreal sensations. As the deplorable persecution of witches tells us, most Europeans unfortunately lacked such botanical knowledge at that time.

Plants of the family Solanaceae

The "insane root" may well have been mandrake (*Mandragora officinarum*), the most famous magic plant of the Mediterranean, sold at high prices in markets north of the Alps. Since the root can resemble a human body, mandrake was believed to contain a spirit that brings fortune and guards against evil those who own or carry the root. However, it was a dangerous business to dig up the plant, as it would issue a deadly shriek when taken from the earth. For this purpose, people were advised to fasten a dog to the half-exposed root and let the animal draw the plant out, a

Did witches once soar through the night sky on broomsticks? Or were they hallucinating after eating or touching certain plants? **Angelika Börsch-Haubold** explains how modern pharmacology helps us to understand the action of many toxic plants – some of which are still used in medicine.



Public domain image; image source: Wikimedia Commons

Picture of a man collecting the mandrake root with the help of a dog (*Tacuinum sanitatis*, manuscript, 1390)

ritual that is often depicted in medieval books (left). Hundreds of years later, Goethe's Mephistopheles makes fun of this superstition: "Da stehen sie umher und staunen, vertrauen nicht dem hohen Fund; der eine faselt von Alraunen, der andre von dem Schwarzen Hund." ('There they stand and marvel, not believing in the precious find; one drivels of mandrake, the other of the Black Dog.' Goethe, *Faust* II, Act I).

Mandrake and other plants of the nightshade family (Solanaceae) contain alkaloids that block nerve impulses, which may lead to hallucinations. Although the cellular and molecular mechanism of action was only explained at the end of the 20th century, the pharmacological effects of these plants were already described by the Greco-Roman physicians Dioscurides (1st century AD) and Galenus (circa 129-199) and, from the 16th century onwards, by authors of herbal medicine books in local languages. The plants deadly nightshade (*Atropa belladonna*) and henbane (*Hyoscyamus niger*; below) are indigenous to middle and northern Europe and were therefore readily available for medicinal use or narcotic and poisonous abuse. The physician Leonhart Fuchs explains in his *New Kreüterbuch* (printed in 1543) how to apply parts of these plants as sleeping agents and painkillers. In addition, he warns of their narcotic and toxic effects (box on page 52). He also groups the plant thorn-apple (*Datura stramonium*; below), which had recently been brought to Europe by travellers from India or Mexico, botanically correctly with the nightshades, but admits his ignorance of its medicinal usage.

Witch ointments

If ever there were women experimenting with poisonous plants, and if ever they did anything other than use their knowledge to heal sick people who could not afford to (or maybe wisely chose not to) see a doctor, they may have used black or deadly nightshade and henbane as powerful ingredients in their medicines. Unfortunately, there are no direct sources for the recipes of witches' concoctions. As is known from the literature condemning magic rituals, so-called 'witch ointments' were used to anoint a broomstick or a chair as a prerequisite for riding through the air and dancing at the witches' sabbath (box on page 53; image left). Such an ointment was reputedly given to the accused directly by the Devil or by an older woman who was already a member of the witches' circle.

The recipes that have survived were written down by physicians. For example, Johannes Hartlieb, explaining the seven magic arts to the duke Johann of Brandenburg-Kulmbach in 1456, names six plants for the prepa-

Plants of the family Solanaceae



Deadly nightshade (*Atropa belladonna*)



Thorn-apple (*Datura stramonium*)



Henbane (*Hyoscyamus niger*)

Images courtesy of Kurt Stueber, Chilepine, and Bdk; source of images: Wikimedia Commons

BACKGROUND

Leonhart Fuchs' *New Kreüterbuch* (new book of herbs), Basel 1543

About mandrake

...The apples as you sniff and taste them/ bring about the sleep. Such power has also their juice. But you shall not use too much/ because otherwise they kill.... Because the internal use of mandrake is very dangerous/ it is better to bring about the sleep/ if need be/ using the apples and fruits of it/ by just tasting them/ and not taking them into the body.

About nightshade

...The other one we named Maddening Herb [deadly nightshade]. Others call it Swine Herb/ and think it is the woody nightshade/ but not without great error/ as this herb is a deadly plant/ and cannot be ingested without harm/ as is possible with the woody nightshade. However, it might be the third sex of mandrake.... Without doubt the Maddening Herb has the power of the fourth nightshade/ which makes mad and foolish/ because it is a deadly herb for human/ as given by experience. I also know certainly of two children/ who have eaten the berries/ which taste quite sweet/ and they died soon thereafter/ although they had been lively and healthy before....

About henbane

Many call henbane also Swine Beans and Sleeping Herb.... Henbane ground freshly alone/ or mixed with malted barley and applied/ takes away all sorts of pains. The juice pressed from the herb/ a handkerchief wetted therein/ and put onto the hot/ running and painful eyes/ quenches the heat/ stops the flow and their pain. The juice or the seed oil put into the ears/ quenches the stinging therein/ and the pain. But use these with great care.... A foot bath made from henbane/ brings sleep.... The roots of Henbane boiled in vinegar and held in the mouth for some time/ takes away the great and bad aches of teeth. In summary/ the green Henbane leaves/ the seeds/ and juice/ which not only make man mad and foolish/ but also the beasts/ must not be used internally/ but only externally to stop the pain/ and to bring sleep/ and if used at all then only with good modesty.

Note: The original German text is available in the online version of this article[W1].

ration of *unguentum pharelis* (box on page 53). Although the plants were believed to possess magic powers, they are relatively harmless. Hartlieb had studied both theology and medicine, as was usual at the time, and the purpose of his writing is to prove that all witchcraft and magic is a lie. He therefore may have left out any narcotic ingredients on purpose.

Other physicians, however, most of them writing centuries later, name the plants of the family of nightshades along with the highly toxic wolfsbane (*Aconitum napellus*), hemlock (*Conium maculatum*), and the sleep-inducing opium poppy (*Papaver somniferum*) as ingredients for witches' medicines. They seem to have put together everything that was poisonous, and ethnologists of the 19th century, recreating witches' ointments and applying them to their skin, indeed experienced disturbing hallucinations with all the side effects on the nervous system that a contemporary pharmacologist would expect.

Witches probably did not read the medical literature of their time, but we can safely assume that they knew of the hallucinogenic effects of the plants that grew in their neighbourhood. Henbane was already used by Germanic tribes to increase the intoxicating action of their ale. It was banned as an ingredient of beer in 1507/1516 in Bavaria, and after that its use in narcotic drinks was, at least in southern Germany, illegal. Deadly nightshade was also widely known. Its common name, 'belladonna', alludes to the practice of Italian Renaissance women who dilated their pupils with eye drops to make them look sexually attractive. If these women also ingested deadly nightshade, they would have experienced euphoria due to a stimulation of the central nervous system.

The pharmacology of nightshade plants

Today the action of deadly nightshade, henbane, and thorn-apple is understood in molecular detail. They all contain the alkaloids atropine and scopolamine, two closely related substances which interfere with the parasympathetic nervous system. Under parasympathetic stimulation, the heart-beat slows, smooth muscles (the involuntary muscles of inner organs) contract, digestion juices flow, and glands produce watery fluids (saliva, tears, bronchial mucous; Table 1). The neurotransmitter acetylcholine couples these nerve signals to the effector cells by activating muscarinic receptors, which in turn trig-

ger changes within the cell that are related to the physiological response of the organ. For example, the intracellular Ca^{2+} concentration increases, which is necessary for muscle contraction and secretion.

Atropine and scopolamine chemically resemble the neurotransmitter acetylcholine. They also bind to muscarinic receptors but fail to stimulate the cell (i.e., act as antagonists). Thus, nerve transmission is blocked. Since acetylcholine is an important neurotransmitter in the brain as well, antagonism of muscarinic receptors also causes central effects. At low doses (0.5-1 mg), atropine leads to mild excitation, whereas scopolamine is responsible for drowsiness, fatigue, dreamless sleep and euphoria. The ingestion of higher doses causes restlessness and hallucinations. Poisoning with about 10 mg of atropine (less for children) leads to central depression of life functions, which may progress to coma, circulatory collapse and respiratory failure (Table 1).

Medical use of atropine and related drugs

Atropine, scopolamine and synthetic analogues are still used as medicines, mainly to inhibit the effects of the parasympathetic nervous system. In order to prevent disturbing side effects, either the substances are applied locally (eye drops for the examination of the retina, inhalation for respiratory diseases), or specific receptor blockers are developed (tablets blocking gastric acid secretion to treat peptic and duodenal ulcers; box on page 54).

Blocking the action of acetylcholine also improves the motion disorder Parkinsons' disease. However, since the introduction of more specific drugs acting on dopamine pathways, atropine derivatives are used only to treat early symptoms or as additional therapy.

The most important use of atropine today is as an antidote for poisoning by the alkaloid muscarine (present in certain mushrooms) or by organophosphate insecticides. Both substances overstimulate the parasympathetic system. To antagonise toxic effects, atropine is injected for up to 48 hours. The doctor monitors the patient closely, giving a new injection as soon as muscarinic symptoms reappear, but not too early so as to prevent atropine toxicity.



CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Trial protocol – witches' ointment

Heinrich Kramer/Institoris, Malleus maleficarum, Strasbourg 1486, Ch. II(3)

The way of flying is the following: as became clear from above, the witches have to prepare a salve from the boiled limbs of children, especially from those whom they have murdered before baptism, and rub it onto any chair or piece of wood following the instructions by the demon, whereupon they immediately rise into the air...

Johannes Hartlieb, The book of all forbidden arts, Munich 1456, Ch. 32

How the riding through the air is accomplished. For these rides men and women, especially the demons, use a salve called 'unguentum pharelis'. They prepare it from seven herbs, each of which is collected on the day belonging to the herb. On Sunday, they pick and dig Solsequium, on Monday Lunariam, on Tuesday Verbenam, on Wednesday Mercurialem, on Thursday Barbam Jovis, on Friday Capillos Veneris. They make the salve by mixing these with quite a lot of birds' blood, and also animal lard. I do not write down details, so as to harm no one. Whenever they want to, they rub it on benches or chairs, rakes or oven forks and fly away. This is nothing but necromancy, which is strongly forbidden.

Classroom activity:

1. Look up the plants that are mentioned in Hartlieb's recipe in botany books, books on plant medicines and the Internet. What properties do they have? Solsequium ("following the sun") could be either *Heliotropium europaeum* or one of the magical plants *Calendula officinalis*, *Cichorium intybus* or *Taraxacum officinale*. Barba Jovis is *Sempervivum tectorum*, and Capillus Veneris is probably the fern *Adiantum capillus-veneris*.
2. Find out about plants of the family Solanaceae. Are they all poisonous? How do the properties of the Solanaceae family compare with those of the plants mentioned in Hartlieb's recipe?
3. What would you feel if you were to apply a witches' ointment to your skin?

Note: The original German text is available in the online version of this article[w1].

Conclusion

Today, we have difficulties understanding the deep, sincere belief in witchcraft and in the reality of magic that governed Europe for centuries. It is even more puzzling to realise that the heyday of witch-hunting happened in the 16th and 17th centuries, a time when the Sun was put in the centre of the universe and Renaissance artists drew muscular, naked human bodies right in the heart of the Vatican. Unfortunately, most of our scientist colleagues of 500 years ago did not speak up and solve the mysteries of night flights on broomsticks, although they – like Shakespeare – were almost certainly familiar with the hallucinogenic effects of some plants. But why did the 'witches' themselves not explain where their dreams came from? I suspect that very few of those who were accused, tortured and burnt had actually experienced hallucinations caused by toxic plants – or indeed by anything else. In the face of the estimated 60,000 victims in Europe, one could believe that the Devil himself had had a hand in it.

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w1- The original German texts are available in the online version of this article: www.scienceinschool.org/2007/issue4/witchmedicine

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CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Effects and side effects of drugs that block the muscarinic receptor

For this exercise, you will need information about the effects and side effects of some anti-muscarinic drugs. Ask your local pharmacist to lend you the *European Pharmacopoeia* or to photocopy the customer information supplied with antimuscarinic drugs (see the list below for examples).

Your students should use this information to consider the effects and side effects of anti-muscarinic drugs. Are they due to the blocking of nerve transmission? Which effects are peripheral and which are central? Using the information in Table 1, students should be able to identify which effects and side effects of the drugs are caused by muscarinic receptor blockers.

Some examples of suitable answers include:

1. Eye drops containing atropine, scopolamine, homatropine or tropicamide are used to dilate the pupils for the examination of the retina. Ocular side effects are photosensitivity and blurred vision.
2. The specific muscarinic M1 receptor antagonist pirenzepine selectively inhibits gastric acid secretion and is used to treat gastric ulcers. However, it can cause a dry mouth, blurred vision, photophobia and difficulty in urination.
3. Ipratropium bromide dilates the smooth muscles in the respiratory tract and alleviates symptoms in asthma. The atropine molecule is chemically changed to contain a charged residue. This prevents the substance from passing into the brain, and central side effects are missing. The local application by aerosol inhalation also helps to restrict unwanted effects.
4. Benztropine or diphenhydramine are used against mild symptoms of Parkinson's disease or as adjunct to the dopamine therapy of Parkinson's disease. Adverse effects are constipation, urinary retention and blurred vision. In addition, sedation and mental confusion have been reported in the elderly.
5. Scopolamine is highly effective for preventing motion sickness when used prophylactically. This is a central effect of the belladonna alkaloid. The drug is incorporated into a multilayered adhesive unit and put directly onto the skin. Common side effects are dry mouth, drowsiness and blurred vision. Psychotic episodes are very rare.

Table 1: Effects of the neurotransmitter acetylcholine and the muscarinic receptor blockers atropine and scopolamine

Organ	Acetylcholine	Atropine, Scopolamine
Eye	contraction of sphincter muscle; contraction of ciliary muscle for near vision; ↑ secretion by lacrimal glands	dilation of pupils (mydriasis); blurring of near vision (cycloplegia); dry eye
Heart	↓ heart rate; ↓ contractility	↑ heart rate (tachycardia); cardiac arrhythmias
Lung	contraction of tracheal and bronchial muscle; ↑ secretion by bronchial glands (watery mucous)	dilation of bronchioles; ↓ secretion: dry mucous membranes
Stomach Intestine	↑ tone and motility; relaxation of sphincters; ↑ secretion by digestive glands	↓ motor activity; ↓ secretory function
Urinary bladder	contraction of muscles of the bladder wall; relaxation of sphincter muscle	difficulty in urination
Skin	↑ secretion by sweat glands	↓ sweat: skin flushed, hot, dry, and scarlet (body temperature ↑)
Mouth	↑ watery secretion of saliva	dry mouth, difficulties in swallowing, thirst
Brain	medulla and higher cerebral centres regulate the vagus nerve	restlessness and fatigue; headache; hallucinations, delirium, followed by coma, circulatory collapse and respiratory failure



REVIEW

People who think that teaching or learning science at school is boring would surely change their mind if they read this article. Angelika Börsch-Haubold takes us on an exciting journey across English and German literature, history, botany, human physiology and biochemistry to explore facts and myths of witch medicine.

Even if the addressed subject is a specific one, the style of the article is engaging, clear and precise and the information provided is supported by a rich set of documents: quotations, original texts with translations, tables, pictures and literature references.

The article and the proposed classroom activities (on the quoted plants and on the side effects of anti-muscarinic drugs) are particularly suitable for upper secondary school but, with a little simplification, they can be adapted for lower secondary school within science and humanities curricula.

In fact the interdisciplinary approach is a relevant feature of this material and gives the possibility to extend the proposed activities to different fields (biology, chemistry, history) and to discuss relevant issues like the problem of drug abuse (health education).

Finally the methodology used by the author can be applied to address other scientific subjects with a wider cultural approach, giving them a deeper meaning and an extra appeal.

So, if you need a special lesson for Halloween... keep this article to hand!

Giulia Realdon, Italy

Congratulations - it's a Ford Fetus

stuff.co.nz

stuff Last updated 17:48, June 14 2016



BREWHAUS3223/REDDIT "My wife is pregnant with a sports car".

It was just a normal checkup on his pregnant wife.

But Reddit user Brewhaus3223 spotted something unusual with the ultrasound image, and it wasn't until he zoom-zoomed into the picture that he noticed a familiar shape - his wife was giving birth to a sports car.

Naturally he posted the picture online and users raced to come up with the best pun.

"The Fast and the Fetus," "The All-New Ford Fetus!" or "Is it a Boygatti or a Girlarri?"

He told the website *Someecards* that this is the couple's second child. Their first was through IVF and they did not expect to conceive naturally.

"A miracle happened and my wife became pregnant naturally, well as naturally as you can when you're carrying a car."

For the record, it's a Boygatti.

Emailnewstips@stuff.co.nz

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Italian police find €0.5 million of artefacts in art thieves' lair

06/07 thelocal.it

The Local



Italian police find €0.5 million of artefacts in art thieves' lair

The Local · 22 Jul 2016, 08:00

Published: 22 Jul 2016 08:00 GMT+02:00

Police in Terno, Campania, uncovered a spectacular hoard of over 200 stolen historical artefacts worth over €0.5 million on Wednesday, inside the lair of a local gang of art thieves.

The four-strong gang is said to have ransacked museums and private collectors across Campania over the last year, embarking on a spree of break-ins and robberies in order to get their hands on the ancient art.

The group would then sell the goods on the black market via a fence, the police said in a statement.

The gang is said to have been behind a daring raid on Termi's local archaeological museum last January, which saw tens of historically important items pilfered.



Among the stolen items was a stunning black ceramic Roman urn. Photo: Carabinieri Caserta.

The gang's loot was made up of a wide range of objects, all dating from between 800 BC and 200 AD

The haul includes Roman and pre-Roman jewellery, marble statues, ivory carvings, elaborate terracotta pots and decorated black ceramics.

A video of the pilfered goods can be seen below.

For the time being, the works have been sequestered by the police who are working to trace their rightful owners.

The men were captured at the conclusion of an elaborate police operation which began following the break-in at Teano's archaeological Museum.

Over the last six months police used surveillance and wiretaps to lead them to the gang of four, all of whom have been placed under house arrest pending further investigation.

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Japanese researchers diagnose hundreds of cases of 'earthquake sickness'

telegraph.co.uk

http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/06/20/japanese-researchers-diagnose-hundreds-of-cases-of-earthquake-si/

The Telegraph

More than 200 people have been diagnosed with "earthquake sickness" amid continuing tremors after a magnitude 7.3 earthquake hit Kyushu Island in April Credit: Taro Karibe/EPA

- Julian Ryall, Tokyo

20 June 2016 • 5:29am

More than two months after southern Japan was struck by two major earthquakes in a matter of days, hundreds of people are being diagnosed with "earthquake sickness".

Also known as post-earthquake dizziness syndrome, the complaint is linked to a loss of balance and can cause a sufferer to feel that they are experiencing an earthquake.

As well as dizziness and disrupted equilibrium, the ailment can trigger bouts of nausea and panic that another earthquake is under way. Some say it is similar to an unpleasant bout of motion sickness, while some doctors suggest it is a manifestation of earthquake phobia.

Also known as "jishin-yoi", which means "earthquake drunk", more than 200 people in Kyushu have been diagnosed with the complaint since a magnitude 6.2 tremor struck on April 14.

Less than 48 hours later, a second quake, with a magnitude of 7.3, rocked central areas of the most southerly of Japan's main islands.

Fifty people were killed in the two tremors, with thousands treated for injuries, many serious and most caused when buildings collapsed.

The tremors were the most violent since the 9.1 quake struck off north-east Japan in March 2011, causing a tsunami that killed more than 19,000 people.

Experts told the Asahi newspaper that survivors of the March 2011 disaster also reported suffering from "earthquake sickness", but that it is proving to be longer-lasting in Kyushu because of the hundreds of aftershocks that continue to plague the region.

More than 1,600 aftershocks with a magnitude of at least 1 on the seven-stage Japanese scale have been reported since the initial earthquakes.

Physiological stress and anxiety are also believed to be contributing factors behind the complaint, with up to 50 per cent of the 214 people complaining of symptoms also reporting feeling depressed.

Women accounted for 80 per cent of the people diagnosed with "earthquake sickness".

Many are living in their vehicles or emergency shelters after their homes were destroyed.

The experts say the condition tends to abate as the aftershocks tail off, although seismic activity in Kyushu shows no sign of halting.

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Credit: Kimimasa Mayama/EPA

Japanese migration theory brought to life - BBC News

bbc.com

By News from Elsewhere... ...as found by BBC Monitoring



Image copyrightNational Museum of Nature and Science

Each boat had a crew of seven, including one woman and a skipper

A team of 14 people aboard a pair of bulrush canoes have recreated part of a migration journey said to have taken place 30,000 years ago.

The expedition is intended to find out if it was possible for early settlers to reach Japan's southern island group from Taiwan using the materials and technology they had at the time, the Kyodo News Service reports. While the original settlers' journey was probably around 730km (450 miles) through the Nansei Islands, the researchers instead paddled their six metre boats some 75 km (46 miles) to reach Iriomote Island in Okinawa Prefecture, arriving on Monday morning after 28 hours at sea.

Preparations for the journey began in February with an appeal from the National Museum of Nature and Science in Tokyo for the public to raise the funds necessary for it to happen. In the end, 26.2m yen ($250,000; £187,000) was raised, exceeding the museum's funding goal, Mainichi Daily News says.

The canoes are modelled on the style of reed boats still in use on Lake Titicaca on the Peru-Bolivia border. They're made entirely from grass, as there is no evidence of woodworking tools in relics dating back more than 30,000 years found on the Nansei Islands that form part of the boat migration theory. "Through the sea journey, we will be able to visualise our ancestors' lives, which are hard to imagine merely through surveys of relics," lead researcher Yosuke Kaifu told The Japan Times.

Now that the first journey is over, attention turns to next July, where the team plans a longer journey from Taiwan to Yonaguni Island, some 200km (125 miles). "We want to know what people 30,000 years ago did," Kaifu said.

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Witness: Colorado Springs stabbing suspect claimed to be Jesus Christ

fox21news.com

By Angela Case and Kody Fisher Published: July 20, 2016, 1:53 pm Updated: July 21, 2016, 8:00 am



kwikstop

Police investigate a stabbing at the Kwik Stop on Platte Avenue / Brett Roberts -- FOX21 News

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. — Police are investigating a stabbing near downtown Colorado Springs.

The stabbing was first reported at 12:48 p.m. Wednesday. It happened at the Kwik Stop on East Platte Avenue at Institute Street, just east of downtown.

Eyewitnesses say it all started with an argument that turned physical.

"He held him like that, he was choking him, and then the other guy took out his knife and went like that and stabbed him. Right here," said Suzie Cardova while pointing to her chest.

She said he only stabbed him one time.

The role of mental illness could be key in this situation.

"[He] claimed to be Jesus Christ stabbing the victim claiming he was the devil," said eyewitness Andrew Morgado.

The police detained the person, but we don't know yet if he'll be charged with any crimes.

One eyewitness said people rallied around the person bleeding after the incident.

"The other girl that works there, she went and got paper towels and they were just holding it. They said, 'they're on their way and calm down,'" said Cardova.

"Our community always is reaching out and assisting people that need help. That isn't uncommon for Colorado Springs; always appreciative when folks are stepping up and helping people who are down," said Lt. Howard Black of the Colorado Springs Police Department.

One person who lives in the area said it can be a somewhat dangerous place depending on the time of day, but this adds a whole new level of scariness to the area.

"Kinda worries me. The idea that you can't simply go out and do some laundry without having to worry about somebody else getting stabbed is terrifying," said Morgado.

FOX21News.com

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« Report: Josh Duggar Won't Apologize For Sex Abuse Because Devil Made Him Do It

Bastille Day Attack: Prayers Are Not The Answer – Reject Religious Extremism »

Kentucky Judge Refuses To Marry Atheists

July 14, 2016 (2016-07-14T15:43:14+00:00) by Michael Stone <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/progressivesecularhumanist/author/mstone/>

A county judge in Kentucky refuses to marry atheists.

In an egregious violation of the U.S. Constitution, Trigg County Judge Hollis Alexande refused <http://www.rawstory.com/2016/07/kentucky-judge-refuses-to-marry-atheist-couple-because-they-dont-mention-god-in-their-vows/> to marry a couple because they were atheists requesting a secular ceremony.

According to a report filed by Friendly Atheist <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/friendlyatheist/2016/07/14/kentucky-judge-refuses-to-conduct-secular-wedding-ceremony-for-couple/>, Judge Alexander refused to marry Mandy Heath and her fiance because they are both non-religious, and they didn't want any mention of God in their secular marriage ceremony.

When Heath went to file the necessary paperwork at the local courthouse on the day before their wedding, Judge Alexander explained that he would not perform the legal ceremony because of his sincerely held religious beliefs.

In attempting to justify why he was refusing to perform his legal duty and honor the request for a simple, secular wedding, Judge Alexander declared <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/friendlyatheist/2016/07/14/kentucky-judge-refuses-to-conduct-secular-wedding-ceremony-for-couple/>:

> "I will be unable to perform your wedding ceremony... I include God in my ceremonies and I won't do one without."

Reporting on Judge Alexander's despicable behavior, the Freedom From Religion Foundation <http://ffrf.org/news/news-releases/item/27088-kentucky-judge-turns-away-nonreligious-couple> explains why Judge Alexander is wrong:

> "By refusing to provide secular ceremonies, Trigg County sends a message of religious

> endorsement. However, according to the Constitution, it is illegal to condition a government benefit on a religious test. By conditioning the receipt of a marriage license from Trigg County on an agreement to have a religious ceremony, the county is violating the rights of nonreligious couples to equal access to government benefits.
>
> "

In addition, Andrew Seidel, attorney for the Freedom From Religion Foundation, sent Judge Alexander a letter warning him about his egregious and unconstitutional actions. The following is an excerpt from Seidel's letter<http://ffrf.org/images/TriggCountyKYJudgerefusessecularwedding.pdf>:

> "
>
> This refusal violates the U.S. Constitution. As a government official, you have an obligation to remain neutral on religious matters.
>
> ...
>
> As a government employee, you have a constitutional obligation to remain neutral on religious matters while acting in your official capacity. You have no right to impose your personal religious beliefs on people seeking to be married. Governments in this nation, including the Commonwealth of Kentucky, are secular. They do not have the power to impose religion on citizens. The bottom line is that by law, there must be a secular option for people seeking to get married. In Trigg County, you are that secular option. The default ceremony offered by your office should be secular and people wishing to add in religion should be able to do so upon request. Not the other way around and certainly not to the exclusion of a secular option.
>
> "

Seidel is on point. Judge Alexander has a constitutional obligation to remain neutral on religious matters, and has no right to impose his religious beliefs on people seeking to be married.

Bottom line: Judge Alexander needs to do his job. If his sincerely held religious beliefs prevent him from doing his job, he needs to find another job.

(H/T Friendly Atheist<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/friendlyatheist/2016/07/14/kentucky-judge-refuses-to-conduct-secular-wedding-ceremony-for-couple/>, Andrew Seidel<https://twitter.com/AndrewLSeidel>)



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Judge Hollis Alexander (Image via Kentucky County Judge/Executive Association)

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jottritter · 7 hours ago
It IS Kentucky, after all.....

An aged, drunken hillbilly staggered into a bar and announced, "Ah'm a- lookin' fer sumbody ta fight!"

Spying a rough-looking young man sitting alone in the back of the place, he

wobbled over to him and said, "Ah had sex with yer sister, an' she said ah wuz the best she'd ever had."
The young tough showed no reaction and kept on drinking.
The old-timer said, "Ah had sex with yer momma, too, an' SHE said ah wuz the best she ever had."
Still no reaction from the young fellow. Exasperated, the old man yelled, "An' ah had sex with yer granny, an...."
The young man put his drink down, looked up, and said, "Granpa, jes' go home an' sleep it off, would ya?"
^ | v · Reply · Share ›

pagansister · 10 hours ago
He just needs to be removed from his office. He isn't doing his job.
^ | v · Reply · Share ›

Methos69 ➔ pagansister · 9 hours ago
Performing marriages isn't part of his job. He is not even an actual judge. He is a judge executive of the fiscal court. He is a member of the executive branch of the county, not the judicial. In other states the position would be called a 'county commissioner'.
^ | v · Reply · Share ›

Gedoff Mylon · 17 hours ago
Let's not get distracted by name calling, people. The real problem here is that this *tax-payer supported public official* is (1) not doing his job, and (2) discriminating in his *public* capacity against specific persons of a specific belief set.

We (are supposed to) have the Rule of Law in this nation; not the Rule of Some Official's Whim.

The judge needs to S.T.F.U. and do the damned job he was hired by the taxpayer to do.
6 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›

LordKabal26 ➔ GedoffMylon · 15 hours ago
He just needs to be removed from his position because he clearly can't do his job properly since he's discriminating based on religion.
3 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›

SocraticGadfly · 18 hours ago
Can unscientific New Agey Cal Dems do conversion therapy on atheists with acupuncture? http://www.cadem.org/our-calif...
^ | v · Reply · Share ›

garden gnome · 18 hours ago
Perhaps this judge can be Kim Davis' next husband and they can live on the Ark.
4 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›

SocraticGadfly · 18 hours ago
Does Hillary's quasi-New Age quack medical guru like atheists?
http://www.nytimes.com/2014/04...
^ | v · Reply · Share ›

Chompachangas · 18 hours ago
Then hire someone else to do the ceremony. A solution in search of a problem...
^ | v · Reply · Share ›

TruthPrevails ➔ Chompachangas · 3 hours ago
They shouldn't have to. The judge is paid by tax payer dollar to do his job and he should do that.
^ | v · Reply · Share ›

lady_black ➔ Chompachangas · 5 hours ago
Nope.
^ | v · Reply · Share ›

Gedoff Mylon ➔ Chompachangas · 17 hours ago
The actual problem here is that this *tax-payer supported public official* is (1) not doing his job, and (2) discriminating *in his public capacity* against specific persons of a specific belief set.

We (are supposed to) have the Rule of Law in this nation; not the Rule of Some Official's Whim.

The judge needs to S.T.F.U. and do the damned job he was hired by the taxpayer to do.
4 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›

Methos69 ➔ Gedoff Mylon · 9 hours ago
His job is not to perform marriages. He is not a Judge. He is a Fiscal Court Judge Executive, which is akin to being a County Commissioner. Having him officiate your wedding is like having a ship's captain do it.
^ | v · Reply · Share ›

Cathy Young ➔ Chompachangas · 18 hours ago
NO NO NO....no one should have to look all over the place for someone to do their goddamn job! He has no right to deny people what is his duty, because he disagrees with their belief, or lack of. People like you are such a huge part of the problem. How would you like a muslim man throwing you out of a store because his religion demands you are completely covered and in the company of a male. Would you just go find another place to shop? Probably not, and you should not have to. According to your logic though, you should.
5 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›

lawboy87 ➔ Chompachangas · 18 hours ago
That's not how it works, that's not how any of this works..... The Constitution REQUIRES him to do his GOVERNMENT JOB, without imposing his religious beliefs on others.

Just like the Judge, you've got it backwards. No one should have to seek an alternative to a Govt Service, that is supposed to be delivered in a neutral way, especially when they pay taxes to receive those services. The day the Judge cashed his first pay check, he was obligated to play by the Govt's rules, it's not up to citizens to seek out an alternative, simply because the Judge is all butt-hurt and doesn't want to play by the rules he swore under oath he would abide by.
6 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›

JohnTomato · 20 hours ago
Hope the county can pay for the finding of the coming civil suit.
6 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›

Sherry Fallis · 20 hours ago
He isn't a minister or preacher or priest. He is a government official and he has no right to demand anyone else abide by his personal religious beliefs.
5 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›

Thomas Krueger · 20 hours ago
I was more sympathetic to the couple before I read the article.

It's the judge's duty to marry a couple that are eligible and file the correct paperwork.

However, now the couple wants to re-write the judge's script to accommodate their beliefs. Do they also refuse to spend money because every bill has "in God we trust" on it?"

If they hadn't asked him change his script, they'd be married.

Reply · Share ›

TruthPrevails ➔ Thomas Krueger · 3 hours ago

His beliefs do not matter. He doesn't represent his religion when he walks in to the work place, he represents EVERYONE from every walk of life. This couple was not asking him to change his beliefs, they were asking him to do the damn job he is paid by tax payer dollar to do (dollars that come from people of every walk of life).

As for the "in God we trust", you prove your lack of intelligence with this. That garbage was not put on money until the 50's and with any luck won't be here much longer it has no pertinence. Here educate yourself before showing the world your stupidity again: http://www.history.com/this-da...

Reply · Share ›

lady_black ➔ Thomas Krueger · 5 hours ago

Civil authorities don't have the power to force "god" on people. I guess you MISSED that part of the article you "read."

1 Reply · Share ›

Chris Bowen ➔ Thomas Krueger · 19 hours ago

So they should be forced to have a religious wedding, even though they don't believe in that religion?

8 Reply · Share ›

splifferton ➔ Thomas Krueger · 20 hours ago

"The default ceremony offered by your office should be secular and people wishing to add in religion should be able to do so upon request. Not the other way around and certainly not to the exclusion of a secular option."

I thought it was well said in the article. I wouldn't want a ceremony that mentioned santa or the tooth fairy either. And to an atheist those are just as real as 'god'.

9 Reply · Share ›

Kama Kairade ➔ splifferton · 20 hours ago

My feeling agrees with all of the above comments. The judge needs to ascertain that both individuals want to be married, and needs to sign the marriage certificate (do you? do you? congratulations). The judge should not be required to perform a ceremony, nor should my tax dollars be used to fund such (religious or non-religious) ceremonies.

3 Reply · Share ›

lady_black ➔ Kama Kairade · 5 hours ago

EVERY jurisdiction in the whole country, and I mean EVERY jurisdiction, charges a fee for weddings, and the state or county sets the amount of the fee. No exceptions. No taxpayer money is spent providing anyone with a wedding. And YES, the judge has to do it. It's his job.

Reply · Share ›

lawbov87 ➔ Kama Kairade · 18 hours ago

But that is part of the Job Description for the job.

The day he cashed the first pay check for being a judge, he was then OBLIGATED to perform wedding ceremonies. The day he was sworn in, he agreed that he would follow the Constitution and State/Federal Law and what he is attempting to do here, is violative of that oath.

Don't want to perform wedding ceremonies (religious and non-religious) then resign and stop drawing your paycheck.

5 · Reply · Share ›

Kama Kairade ➔ lawboy87 · 17 hours ago

I'm having trouble believing that judges are required to participate in (non)religious ceremonies. Requited to wed, yes. Required to wear a colander, burn incense, kiss a cross, drink lambs blood, while wedding.... no. Those kind of things would be at their discretion.

· Reply · Share ›

Scott Keith · 20 hours ago

How is this guy a judge if he doesn't know the law? That is terrifying.

· Reply · Share ›

MissCellania ➔ Scott Keith · 19 hours ago

It's an elected position. You don't have to have any expertise at all.

1 · Reply · Share ›

lady_black ➔ MissCellania · 4 hours ago

Maybe in Kentucky you don't. In my state, you need a law license.

· Reply · Share ›

Gedoff Mylon · 20 hours ago

Superstitious government officials not doing their jobs. What else is new?

1 · Reply · Share ›

Wesley Long · 21 hours ago

If he understood his religious beliefs at all, he'd refuse to perform *ANY* "marriage" ceremonies, and refer them to ordained clergy. The BS is strong with this one.

4 · Reply · Share ›

lady_black ➔ Wesley Long · 4 hours ago

His religious beliefs are IRRELEVANT. He's an agent of the state, which means that his religious beliefs do not determine how he performs his duties. Furthermore, the Bible doesn't require a religious ceremony for marriage. It's according to the cultural custom.

1 · Reply · Share ›

Hillary Allen (aka Canuck) · a day ago

So what happened after that? Did he get sued or...? Did they get married? Anyone?

· Reply · Share ›

Chris DeVries · a day ago

Honestly, I don't get why you would take a job that requires - legally - you to do something that your interpretation of your faith prohibits you from doing. In Kim Davis' case, yes SSM didn't exist in her state when she started working there but the writing was on the wall (plus, her complaint, in the end, came down to "I don't want my name on these here marriage certificates" which is textbook discrimination, something no government official is allowed to do). In my mind,

this doofus is even worse because atheists always had the right to marriage (at least as long as he's been working as a judge), and judges who perform marriages are required to provide secular services. Priests and pastors and rabbis are where you go for religious services, but judges are supposed to be secular unless a couple explicitly want something religious (but if you DID want a religious ceremony, why not use one of the thousands of religious officials who perform them?). So he is essentially perpetuating the religious hegemony of the Christian faith in his state; judges are the main recourse non-religious couples have to perform a marriage ceremony that conforms to their values and he has decided he won't do his duty.

Thank goodness there is no legal defense he can offer here; he's in the wrong and will become Kentucky's next Christian martyr as soon as a court can offer summary judgement against him.

9 · Reply · Share ›

Methos69 → Chris DeVries · 9 hours ago

He's not a Judge. He's a Fiscal Court Judge Executive. The article misrepresents his job title and function. He isn't required to perform weddings at all.

· Reply · Share ›

lady_black → Methos69 · 4 hours ago

Yeah. You keep saying that. But you fail to offer any evidence.
If he's a recognized civil officiant, it doesn't matter what his title is.
He cannot discriminate.

· Reply · Share ›

Joe · a day ago

Well, I wouldn't want to marry him in any case, so it's not a big deal.

· Reply · Share ›

erikc · 2 days ago

This is why judges shouldn't be elected. The position requires a knowledge of the law that the average person isn't capable of discerning. It's democracy by Dunning-Kruger syndrome.

7 · Reply · Share ›

Arbustin → erikc · 19 hours ago

This particular judge was appointed by the governor.

· Reply · Share ›

apeman40 → erikc · a day ago

I could be wrong, but I'm pretty sure that, even in Kentucky, a person has to have had some experience as an attorney and possess a juris doctorate in order to run for judge.

· Reply · Share ›

lady_black → apeman40 · 4 hours ago

It varies by state. In my state, all positions that involve rendering legally binding decisions (even unemployment or worker's compensation hearing referees or JPs) must have a law license.

1 · Reply · Share ›

Methos69 → apeman40 · 10 hours ago

He's a fiscal court judge executive, not an actual judge.

"A County Judge/Executive (or simply, Judge/Executive, and often spelled Judge-Executive) is an elected official in the U.S. Commonwealth of Kentucky who is the head of the executive branch of a government in a county. The Judge/Executive is an ex officio member of the Fiscal Court, the county's legislature."

member of the Fiscal Court, the county's legislature.

"The Judge/Executive serves a four-year term and may be re-elected indefinitely. Though he wields no judicial power, the Judge/Executive is often informally referred to as "The Judge", is formally addressed as "Your Honor", and is styled as "The Honorable". The Judge/Executive is a voting member of the Fiscal Court, enabling him to exercise a role in the legislative process."

1 · Reply · Share ›



apeman40 ➔ Methos69 · 9 hours ago

Thanks. I'm learning all kinds of stuff today.

· Reply · Share ›



Thomas Krueger ➔ apeman40 · 20 hours ago

You would be incorrect. JP's in AZ have no requirement of a JD or being a practicing attorney.

1 · Reply · Share ›



apeman40 ➔ Thomas Krueger · 20 hours ago

Wow. That's amazing.

· Reply · Share ›



erikc ➔ apeman40 · a day ago

Sure, but even having those qualifications doesn't make you fit to be a judge, and especially not a good one, as we see all too often. The average voter has no idea how to distinguish between someone with a keen understanding of the law and someone whose firebrand sense of justice will be frequently overturned in higher courts.

3 · Reply · Share ›



apeman40 ➔ erikc · a day ago

True. However, in changing it, it's possible we could end up with a worse system.

· Reply · Share ›



erikc ➔ apeman40 · 14 hours ago

Then they should switch to a system like other advanced nations have, which is based on peer review. No one rises to a position where they can be appointed to the bench without having impressed their colleagues first.

1 · Reply · Share ›

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Judges Disqualify 'Witch' From World Record For A Wicked Reason

huffingtonpost.com

Even magic couldn't help her win this marathon world record.

07/01/2016 11:52 pm ET

- Lauren Aratani Intern, HuffPost Hawaii

Breaking a world record isn't easy, but having one taken away from you? That's a whole lot harder.

Nicola Nuttall of Lancashire, England, decided to run the London Marathon in April in hopes of breaking the Guinness World Record for "Fastest Marathon Dressed as a Witch," and to raise money for the Alzheimer's Society, according to The Telegraph.

Before the race, she sent Guinness officials a photo of her costume — a black, floor-length dress purchased off eBay — and the organization approved. All she had to do was finish the race in less than four hours while wearing full-witch attire, including a witch's hat and broom.

When game day came, Nuttall finished the 26.2-mile marathon in just three hours and 31 minutes — an impressive time, even for someone without a costume.

> Come on twitter I wasn't easy to miss! Any @londonmarathoners see a witch run on Sunday? need evidence for @GWR pic.twitter.com/PDX7AwOw0l
>
> — Nicola Nuttall (@nicnut) April 28, 2016

Nuttall seemed set to clinch the world record.

But when Guinness officials reviewed photos of Nuttall during the marathon, they deemed her dress as "substantially shorter" than the one they saw in her pre-race photo submission.

"With costume records, we ask the applicant to submit a photo beforehand of their costume so it can be approved by records management," a spokesman for Guinness told The Telegraph. "Unfortunately, while Nicola's pre-marathon photo met our guidelines of having a floor-length dress, her photos from the day show her with a substantially shorter dress with slits cut in for more movement."

For months, Nuttall argued that Guinness judges had failed to see the high slits that ran up the sides of her dress in her costume submission photo. She said she altered the dress so that it would be harder to run in it.

"Having sent it, they couldn't see the splits up the side and I actually thought this might make it easier to run in, so I added material to make it more difficult," Nuttall recently told Pendle Today.

Still, the Guinness judges wouldn't budge.

"I feel like I've let everybody down. I feel like a failure," Nuttall said. "I've been back and forth to them, but they have been so strict and inflexible."

Even though she missed out on the world record, Nuttall still raised the equivalent of $2,273 for the

Alzheimer's Society through a crowdfunding page.

Perhaps witches aren't so wicked after all.

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Juror dismissed at start of Strasser-Hird trial after claiming visit from victim's ghost

calgaryherald.com

http://calgaryherald.com/news/crime/juror-dismissed-at-start-of-strasser-hird-trial-after-claiming-visit-from-victims-ghost

Published on: June 13, 2016 | Last Updated: June 13, 2016 10:08 PM MDT



The Calgary Courts Centre.

Crystal Schick / Calgary Herald

Perhaps if they had inquired about the eventual verdict, participants in the Lukas Strasser-Hird homicide trial could have avoided more than a month of evidence.

Just one day into the multi-week trial on May 5, an unidentified female juror indicated to Justice Glen Poelman she was no longer able to remain impartial in the case.

In a letter she sent to the Court of Queen's Bench judge, read into the court record by him, the juror explained she couldn't go on after hearing Crown lawyer Marlo MacGregor outlining the prosecution's case the previous day.

"I was presented with information the evening of May 4, 2016, which I feel directly impacts my ability to act as a jury member on this case with an unbiased opinion," the juror said in her note to Poelman.

"I have a gift of being an intuitive and medium, and although I did not believe this gift would impact my ability to provide judgment on this case based solely on the facts presented before me in court … I am wrong," she said.

The unnamed woman then told Poelman she could explain to him what a medium is if he wished.

"I can describe it as the ability to see, hear, feel, sense those that have died or whom are about to be born," she said, before explaining what occurred to impact her impartiality.

"Last night the deceased presented himself to me and made me feel what he went through as he was being killed, the intensity of his injuries, and the location of his wounds," she said.

"He also showed me information relating to those who beat, stabbed, and kicked him.

"I cannot get those horrible images out of my mind. I feel what he felt," she explained.

"I hear what he heard. He kept repeating the phrase 'I'm sorry, I am so sorry, please tell my family I am sorry.'"

The woman then explained she wasn't asking Poelman to believe in the paranormal.

"Sir, I am not asking that you believe in what I experienced last night, but I ask that you believe in

how this has affected me on a personal, mental, and physical level," she said.

"It was, and never has been, my intention to retract my ability to fulfil the juror role or come into court with a bias, but at this point I feel I can no longer act as a member of this jury fairly and without bias towards the accused," she said.

With the agreement of counsel, Poelman excused the woman from further service.

Charged with second-degree murder in Strasser-Hird's Nov. 23, 2013, slaying are Franz Cabrera, Jordan Liao, Joch Pouk and Assmar Shlah.

The remaining jurors are now deliberating the case.

KMartin@postmedia.com

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Jehovah's Witnesses Destroy Ancient Indigenous Temple in Mexico

telesurtv.net



A statue of an Otomi warrior seen in Santiago de Queretaro, Mexico. | Photo: Wikicommons

Published 28 June 2016

The criminals behind the destruction of a sacred millenia-old temple claimed they were serving god.

Members of the Christian sect Jehovah's Witness reportedly destroyed a sacred Indigenous archaeological heritage site in central eastern Mexico in an act of apparent religious intolerance, claiming the traditional rituals practiced at the ancient ceremonial place were "not Christian," local media reported Monday.

The attack on the more than 7,000 year-old Makonikha sanctuary in the central Mexican state of Hidalgo destroyed at least a dozen stone structures used as altars in the spirituality of the Otomi Indigenous people.

Jehovah's Witnesses have fessed up to being behind the destruction of the stone altars, but have not taken responsibility for a hole that has reportedly been drilled in the base of a pyramid at the San Bartolo Tutotepec archeological site.

Members of the Christian sect say the destruction was motivated by a belief that the ancient Indigenous religion involved devil worship. The perpetrators claim that they were following the word of god by destroying the temple site.

The ancient religion of the Otomi people traditionally holds sacred various deities including earth, water, and fire, and reveres their gods with offerings.

According to anthropologists cited by the Mexican daily La Jornada, Mayonikha for the Otomi — whose territory spreads across central Mexico in at least eight modern-day states — is comparable in significance to Mecca for Muslims or the Vatican for Catholics.

It remains unclear when the Jehovah's Witnesses carried out the vandalism or how they gained access to the sacred site, protected by local Indigenous people with access only granted to worshippers.

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K-Town teen in bunny suit raises police alarm

05/08

thelocal.de

The Local



K-Town teen in bunny suit raises police alarm

The Local · 6 Aug 2016, 09:00

Published: 06 Aug 2016 09:00 GMT+02:00
Updated: 06 Aug 2016 09:00 GMT+02:00

For a second there, Kaiserslautern police thought a girl in a bunny suit was part of the new Ocean's 14 as she entered a bank. But it wasn't quite so.

The Rhineland-Palatinate city of Kaiserslautern was in turmoil on Wednesday over a 15-year-old girl who entered a bank wearing a bunny costume, Western Palatinate police reported.

Upon spotting her, a concerned driver immediately called the police, thinking the disguised individual would rob the place.

Little did he know that the facility had no more than one cash machine to target.

The police were alarmed nevertheless and sent multiple patrol cars to the scene.

But when they arrived, the bunny was gone.

Searching the area for further clues, police stumbled upon a girl in a bunny costume at the door of a neighbourhood home.

When asked by the police, she reported that she had come back from walking her dog a couple of minutes ago.

The reason why she was dressed as a large rabbit: she had only moved in a few days before and the costume was the only thing she had to wear that wasn't packed away or in the wash.

The Local Europe GmbH
Schwedter Strasse 227
10435 Berlin
Germany

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In the mouth he inserted him a piece of brick and feet pierced with nails

7 September 15 20:00 fakt.pl

July 26, 2016.

Fakt24



The vampire Pomeranian Przemysław Gryń / newspix.pl

vampire Pomeranian

They thought it was a sure way to protect against vampire. The stone in the teeth had to stop him from biting, and the nails in his feet before the rise from the grave. Aspen pin was not found probably because the primary discoverer of the skeleton did not know where to drive. The famous vampire was discovered two years ago and thoroughly Examined by scientists. Now it will be exhibited at the Museum of Earth History Kamienska.

Archaeologists have found human remains mysterious leading work on the former marketplace. - According to my theory, damage to the skeleton probably made Gravediggers - said prof. Karol Piasecki, an Anthropologist at the University of Szczecin. - Who knows, maybe they were drunk and frightened Their view of bones? Maybe it was Just that this **skull has an additional seam dividing the frontal bone in two and it looked strange?** Or because his teeth bared seemed somehow? - Wonders of the researcher. It calms down, too, that certainly is not a real vampire.

The deceased was probably buried around. XVI-XVII century. At that time, near the church instead of the marketplace was a cemetery. Since the eighteenth century, the dead have been buried there. **The skeleton had been discovered accidentally. So terrified finders That pierced his tibia and femur probably iron spikes** . The idea was a "vampire" could not get up from the grave. On the other hand, he had a stone in his teeth Prevent him biting. When the corpse was not found although aspen pin, but Anthropologist has the answer. - When the remains were unearthed, they were just bones, no soft tissue. it would not be known where to stick the pin - Explains.

He added That the preserved examples of practices vampire is not too much. - **One of the most popular methods to Prevent the uprising from the grave were burying the dead face down.** It was believed That if a vampire woke up, gone down into the earth . These practices are indeed prohibited by the Catholic Church. And once Their use threatened excommunication. In the worst case stack - said prof. Piasecki.

Now, the famous vampire become the main attraction of the Museum of Earth History Kamienska, Which is preparing for its special exhibition.

/www.rmf24.pl/

Gliwice. The tombs of vampires

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W usta włożono mu kawałek cegły, a nogi przebito gwoździami

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Wampir z Pomorza

W usta włożono mu kawałek cegły, a nogi przebito gwoździami

Kamień Pomorski wampir z pomorza wampir z Kamienia Pomorskiego wampir wampiry zbadali wampira archeologia historia sposób na wampira

Myśleli, że to pewny sposób ochrony przed wampirem. Kamień w zębach miał powstrzymać go przed gryzieniem, a gwoździe w nogach przed powstaniem z grobu. Osikowego kołka nie znaleziono pewnie dlatego, że pierwotni odkrywcy szkieletu nie wiedzieli, gdzie go wbić. Słynny wampir został odnaleziony dwa lata temu i dokładnie przebadany przez naukowców. Teraz będzie wystawiony w Muzeum Historii Ziemi Kamieńskiej.

Archeolodzy natknęli się na tajemnicze szczątki ludzkie prowadząc prace na dawnym targowisku. – Według mojej teorii, uszkodzeń szkieletu dokonali prawdopodobnie grabarze – mówi prof. Karol Piasecki, antropolog z Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego. – Kto wie, może byli nietrzeźwi i przestraszył ich widok kości? Może chodziło o to, że ta **czaszka ma dodatkowy szew dzielący kość czołową na dwie części i to wyglądało dziwnie?** A może dlatego, że zęby wydawały się jakoś wyszczerzone? – zastanawia się naukowiec. Uspokaja też, że z pewnością nie jest to prawdziwy wampir.

Zmarłego pochowano prawdopodobnie ok. XVI-XVII wieku. W tamtym czasie koło kościoła zamiast targowiska znajdował się cmentarz. Od XVIII stulecia zmarłych już tam nie chowano. **Szkielet musiał zostać odkryty przypadkowo. Tak przeraził znalazców, że przebili jego kość piszczelową i udową prawdopodobnie metalowymi gwoździami**. Chodziło o to, żeby "wampir" nie mógł wstać z grobu. Z kolei kamień w zębach miał mu uniemożliwić gryzienie. Przy zwłokach nie znaleziono co prawda osikowego kołka, ale antropolog ma na to odpowiedź. – Gdy zwłoki zostały wykopane, były to już tylko kości, bez tkanek miękkich. Nie byłoby wiadomo, gdzie wbić kołek – wyjaśnia.

Jak dodaje, zachowanych przykładów praktyk wampirycznych nie ma zbyt wiele. – **Jedną z najpopularniejszych metod uniemożliwienia powstania z grobu było chowanie zmarłego twarzą do dołu.** Wierzono, że gdyby taki wampir się obudził, poszedłby w głąb ziemi. Te praktyki są zresztą zakazane przez kościół katolicki. A kiedyś za ich stosowanie groziła ekskomunika. W najgorszym wypadku stos – mówi prof. Piasecki.

Teraz słynny wampir stanie się główną atrakcją Muzeum Historii Ziemi Kamieńskiej, które szykuje dla niego specjalną wystawę.

/www.rmf24.pl/

Gliwice. Odkryto groby wampirów

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Kayaker stranded after croc bite

stuff.co.nz

stuff Last updated 21:24, August 6 2016



TERRY TREWIN A crocodile attacked a kayaker off the Queensland coast.

A man who was left stranded on a Queensland island after a crocodile attacked his kayak told rescuers he had never paddled so fast in his life when the beast sank its teeth into his small vessel.

The man, who is yet to be identified, was rescued on Saturday morning, four days after he had set off from Yeppoon on a journey to Stanage Bay, which is about 200km north of the central Queensland town.

His kayak was attacked about 3km off Townshend Island in the Shoalwater Bay area, about 111km north of Rockhampton.

"It's croc country out there," an Australian Maritime Safety Authority spokeswoman.

"He said it's the fastest he's ever paddled."

The man was well provisioned, as he was expecting his trip from Yeppoon to Stanage Bay to take several days.

Bad weather kept the kayaker stuck on the island and he activated his personal locator beacon after not being able to leave due to low tides.

An RACQ helicopter out of Rockhampton rescued the man after his beacon was detected at 7am on Saturday.

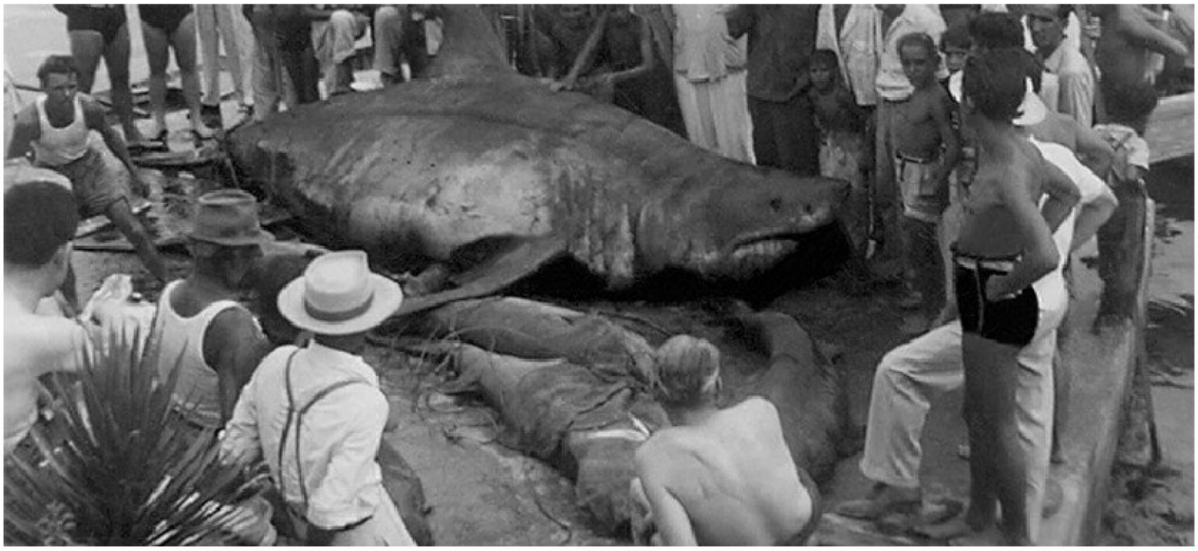
There were no reports of him being injured, the AMSA spokeswoman said.

Emailnewstips@stuff.co.nz

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http://sharkopedia.discovery.com/shark-topics/record-breakers-2/?sf31290575=1#was-el-monstruo-actually-the-largest-great-white-ever

WAS "EL MONSTRUO" ACTUALLY THE LARGEST GREAT WHITE EVER?



In 1945, an enormous white shark was caught off Cojimar, a fishing village east of Havana, Cuba. In a widely distributed photo of the shark, the entire village seems to have come out for the event. Several adults are seen in the background, while kids sit on the shark carcass, legs dangling over the side. The shark was named "El Monstruo," meaning "the monster."

When measured, the shark was found to be in excess of 21 feet and weighed over 7,000 pounds, which would make it the largest great white shark on record. But not all scientists trust the measurements taken that day, and the true size and weight of El Monstruo have been debated ever since.

Fishermen notoriously exaggerate the size of their catches, and so it holds that fishy stories have accompanied infamous shark landings over the years. Later analysis of the photo by experts, such as R. Aidan Martin of the ReefQuest Center for Shark Research, suggests that El Monstruo fell short of its stated size. Martin instead concluded it measured around 16 feet in length, with a weight that's hard to determine just based on a single photo.

For comparison, experts mainly agree that 20 feet is the more common maximum size for a great white, with these larger individuals weighing around 4,200 pounds. Females tend to be larger than males, so they can fall into the 20-footer group. The majority of great whites, however, measure between 13 and 16 feet with an average weight of 1,500 to 2,450 pounds.

This last of its kind windmill is back at Arcadia Denny's

By Christopher Yee , San Gabriel Valley Tribune

sgvtribune.com

SAN GABRIEL VALLEY TRIBUNE

The San Gabriel Valley Tribune



Denny's restored the only remaining Van de Kamp Dutch bakery windmill, built in 1967, and celebrated its reactivation with a "switch-on" event Wednesday, June 29, 2016 with Arcadia city officials. (Photo by Walt Mancini/Pasadena Star-News)

Denny's restored the only remaining Van de Kamp Dutch bakery windmill, built in 1967, and celebrated its reactivation with a "switch-on" event Wednesday, June 29, 2016 with Arcadia city officials. (Photo by Walt Mancini/Pasadena Star-News)

ARCADIA>> Harold Bissner Jr. never expected to see the windmill at the corner of Huntington Drive and Santa Anita Avenue to spin again.

Half a century ago, in his prime as an architect, Bissner was commissioned to design the template for Van de Kamp's Holland Dutch Bakery's coffee shop franchise. Opened in 1967, Arcadia's was the first of 15 built from his designs.

Today, the Arcadia location remains as the last of the windmills.

Diner-chain Denny's purchased the location in 1989. Since then, blades of the building's windmill stopped spinning. That changed Wednesday afternoon.

Bissner and other local leaders gathered outside the Denny's to officially reactivate the windmill, which is set to spin all day, every day, for the foreseeable future.

"You used to see the windmills in every city around here," said Bissner, 92, of Pasadena. "It's hard to believe this is the last one, but it's nice to know there's one left for people to enjoy."

More than 50 people attended the festivities, held kitty corner from the Denny's in Arcadia Park. The crowd came as no surprise to former mayor George Fasching, who pushed for Denny's to reactivate the windmill for years.

"The windmill welcomes people into Arcadia's downtown area, and it helps remind people of the city's history, especially now that it's lit and spinning like in its heyday," Fasching said.

Denny's spent about $100,000 refurbishing the windmill — replacing the motor, reinforcing the blades and adding new LED lighting — according to President and CEO John Miller.

"It's a bigger bill than we initially thought," Miller said. "But we figured when the windmill is still

spinning in 100 years, the cost won't matter."

Mayor Pro Tem Peter Amundson, who has spent most of his life in Arcadia, said he hopes future generations will make memories at the restaurant like he did over the course of many meals at both Van de Kamp's and Denny's.

Amundson said he is often reminded of Van de Kamp's, which made his wife's favorite pastries.

"It was one of those things you take for granted till you lose it," Amundson said. "Denny's has been an excellent steward over the years, and it's done even better in getting the windmill spinning again."

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Ohio Supreme Court throws out flawed law barring police from sex acts with minors; other restrictions remain

By Robert Higgs, cleveland.com | Follow on Twitter on July 28, 2016 at 3:45 PM, updated July 29, 2016 at 4:05 PM

cleveland.com



PD-stock-Ohio-Supreme-Court.jpg

In a 4-3 decision, the court said it was not condoning the behavior of the officer involved in the case. But the section of the sexual battery statute, as written to apply to officers, violated the equal protection clauses of the U.S. and Ohio constitutions. *(cleveland.com file)*

COLUMBUS, Ohio – A divided Ohio Supreme Court on Thursday upheld a decision from Cuyahoga County that struck down a law barring police officers from engaging in sexual conduct with minors.

A 4-3 decision, the ruling by the state's highest court also affirms the appellate decision to overturn a Waite Hill officer's conviction.

That doesn't mean that police may engage in such acts without fear of prosecution. Other laws barring adults, including peace officers, from having sexual conduct with minors remain in place. And in its opinion the court was clear that it was not condoning the officer's behavior.

The state said a provision of the state's sexual battery statute, which bars sexual conduct with a minor when the officer is more than two years older than the minor, violated the equal protection clauses in the U.S. Constitution and the Ohio Constitution.

Writing for the court, Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor noted that provisions in the sexual battery statute that apply to a teacher or a minister or a mental health provider are different in that they require an occupational relationship with the minor. The ban for officers, though, required no such relationship and as such was an "arbitrarily disparate treatment of peace officers."

You can read the full opinion below. Mobile users click here.

The original case

The case involved former Waite Hill officer Matthew Mole, then 35, who was convicted in 2012 of sexual battery. Mole was caught engaging in sexual conduct with a 14-year-old boy in Richmond Heights and was tried in Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court.

According to the Supreme Court, Mole was contacted by the boy through an online dating site. The boy portrayed himself as an 18-year-old high school senior, and the two met. The boy's mother caught them engaging in sexual conduct.

At trial, a jury returned a hung verdict on a charge of unlawful sexual conduct with a minor, which prohibits contact with a minor ages 13 to 15.

A judge, though, ruled Mole was guilty of sexual battery by virtue of his position as a police officer

and sentenced him to two years in prison.



Previous coverage: Former Waite Hill officer convicted of sexual battery against a 14-year-old boy

Previous coverage: Former Waite Hill officer convicted of sexual battery against a 14-year-old boy

A Cuyahoga County Common Pleas judge found former Waite Hill police officer Matthew Mole guilty on Monday of sexual battery for having sex with a 14-year-old boy.

Mole's conviction was overturned by the Ohio 8th District Court of Appeals, which ruled the portion of the sexual battery law applied to Mole was unconstitutional. Cuyahoga County prosecutors appealed to the Ohio Supreme Court.

Mole never told the boy he was an officer and that the boy didn't know that fact, according to the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court's ruling

In her opinion upholding the appellate court, O'Connor wrote that the law focuses on "those who use their professional status to take unconscionable advantage of minors, except in the case of peace officers," O'Connor wrote. "Peace officers are liable under the statute even if they did not use their status as peace officers to identify potential victims and abuse them."

The government has an interest in protecting minors from coercion and in keeping officers from abusing their authority, O'Connor wrote. But the section of the sexual battery addressing officers "represents a classification of persons undertaken for its own sake, something the Equal Protection Clause does not permit."

Justices Paul E. Pfeifer and William M. O'Neill concurred with O'Connor's opinion. Justice Judith Ann Lanzinger concurred in judgment only.

Dissenting opinions

Justices Judith French and Sharon Kennedy each wrote dissents. Justice Terrence O'Donnell concurred with them.

Kennedy wrote that the state had legitimate reasons for treating officers as a special group, and that the majority erred in that it didn't show the law would be unconstitutional in all cases involving that group.

French, too, wrote that the state had an interest in holding officers to a higher standard.

"The General Assembly determined that the privilege of serving as a peace officer comes with the obligation to adhere to a higher standard of conduct both on and off duty," she wrote.



[Until this opinion appears in the Ohio Official Reports advance sheets, it may be cited as *State v. Mole*, Slip Opinion No. 2016-Ohio-5124.]

NOTICE

This slip opinion is subject to formal revision before it is published in an advance sheet of the Ohio Official Reports. Readers are requested to promptly notify the Reporter of Decisions, Supreme Court of Ohio, 65 South Front Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215, of any typographical or other formal errors in the opinion, in order that corrections may be made before the opinion is published.

SLIP OPINION No. 2016-OHIO-5124

THE STATE OF OHIO, APPELLANT, v. MOLE, APPELLEE.

[Until this opinion appears in the Ohio Official Reports advance sheets, it may be cited as *State v. Mole*, Slip Opinion No. 2016-Ohio-5124.]

Criminal law—Sexual battery—R.C. 2907.03(A)(13) unconstitutional—Statute violates equal protection by irrationally imposing strict liability on peace officers—Government cannot punish class of professionals without making connection between classification and prohibited act—Creating separate class for peace officers in order to subject them off-duty behavior to criminal sanctions on basis of strict liability is not rationally related to governmental interest in maintaining public confidence in law enforcement, ensuring integrity of its members, or protecting minors from sexual exploitation.

(No. 2015-1410—Submitted July 9, 2016—Decided July 28, 2016.)

APPEAL from the Court of Appeals for Cuyahoga County,

No. 98900, 2013-Ohio-3131.

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p. 2



SUPREME COURT OF OHIO

O'CONNOR, C.J.

¶ 1 In this appeal, we address the validity of a facial constitutional attack, on equal-protection grounds, against a subdivision of Ohio's sexual-battery statute, R.C. 2907.03(A)(13). R.C. 2907.03(A)(13) prohibits sexual conduct when one person is a minor and "the offender is a peace officer, and the offender is more than two years older than the other person."

¶ 2 R.C. 2907.03 is generally a valid scheme insofar as it imposes strict liability for sexual conduct between various classes of offenders who exploit their victims through established authoritarian relationships. But subdivision (A)(13) irrationally imposes that same strict liability on peace officers even when there is no recognition-based relationship between the officer and the victim. We therefore conclude that R.C. 2907.03(A)(13) is an arbitrarily disparate treatment of peace officers that violates equal protection under the Ohio Constitution and the United States Constitution. Accordingly, we affirm the decision of the Eighth District Court of Appeals declaring R.C. 2907.03(A)(13) facially unconstitutional.

FACTS AND BACKGROUND

¶ 3 Appellee, Matthew Mole, was a police officer. He first encountered J.S. when J.S. initiated a conversation with Mole through the use of a dating application on his mobile phone.

¶ 4 J.S. claimed to be 18 years old and a senior in high school. Mole was 35. Upon J.S.'s invitation, Mole came to J.S.'s house at 3:00 a.m. on December 16, 2011, and was led into an adult restroom at the back of the house. The two undressed and performed oral sex on each other in the dark. They were discovered by J.S.'s mother shortly after. At that point, Mole learned, for the first time, that J.S. was 14 years old.

¶ 5 Mole was charged with one count of unlawful sexual conduct with a minor, R.C. 2907.04, which prohibits sexual conduct with a minor between the ages of 13 and 15 years old when the offender is 18 or older and knows the other person's

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p. 3



January Term, 2016

age or is reckless in that regard. He was also charged with one count of sexual battery under R.C. 2907.03(A)(13), which prohibits sexual conduct by a peace officer with a minor when the officer is more than two years older than the minor.

¶ 6 Before trial, Mole moved the trial court to declare R.C. 2907.03(A)(13) unconstitutional and to dismiss the sexual-battery charge from the indictment. Mole unsuccessfully argued that the statute's lack of a mens rea and failure to connect a defendant's occupational status with proscribed sexual activity violates equal protection and due process. The trial court summarily denied the motion.

¶ 7 At trial, Mole elected to have the sisterfelsexual-conduct charge tried to the jury and the sexual-battery charge tried to the bench. The jury became deadlocked, the court declared a mistrial, and the state dismissed the indictment as to the charge under R.C. 2907.04.

¶ 8 But the bench trial resulted in Mole's conviction for sexual battery under R.C. 2907.03(A)(13), which makes peace officers strictly liable for sexual conduct with anyone under the age of 18 when the offender is more than two years older. Thus, despite the jury's inability to find that Mole was reckless with regard to J.S.'s age, the state was nevertheless able to obtain Mole's conviction for the same conduct based solely on Mole's chosen profession, i.e., without proving that Mole knew or was reckless about J.S.'s age, without proving that J.S. knew that Mole was a peace officer, and without proving that Mole's profession and status as a peace officer had any relation to his acquaintance with J.S. or the sexual conduct with him. Mole was sentenced to two years in prison.

¶ 9 Mole appealed to the Eighth District Court of Appeals, arguing that R.C. 2907.03(A)(13) violated the Equal Protection and Due Process Clauses of both

SUPCO-State-v-Mole Contents Original Document (PDF) »

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Lightning strikes kill at least 90 in India

By Michael Pearson and Sugam Pokharel, CNN Updated 4:14 PM ET, Wed June 22, 2016
2016-06-22T13:10:01Z

cnn.com



Lightning kills at least 90 in India

Lightning kills at least 90 in India

- Lightning strikes are common during India's monsoon rains
- Farmers depend on monsoons to deliver vital water

New Delhi (CNN)Lightning strikes killed at least 90 people Tuesday in four Indian states as monsoon rains swept across much of the country.

"Lightning strikes are common during monsoons, but there have been more strikes than usual this year," said Vyas Ji, principal secretary in Bihar, where a record 57 people died Tuesday from the strikes -- the most of any state in the country. In 2014, 2,582 people died in lightning strikes, according to the government, making lightning the leading killer among all natural disasters in India.



Indians wade through a flooded street Tuesday in Mumbai.

Here's a breakdown of deaths reported in other states Tuesday:

• Seventeen people died in Uttar Pradesh, according to Anil Kumar, relief commissioner for the state government.

• Ten died in Jharkhand, according to Col. Sanjay Kumar Srivastava, state director of disaster management.

• Six people died in Madhya Pradesh, according to Maithili Sharan, additional director general of Madhya Pradesh police.

The seasonal monsoon rains have been highly anticipated in India, which has been mired in drought for two years. The country's agricultural sector heavily depends on the rains.

Indian farmers pray monsoon rains will end drought

CNN's Mike Pearson wrote from Atlanta, and CNN's Sugam Pokharel reported and wrote from New Delhi.

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Little people and swamp spirits in Vermont

blogspot.com

http://newenglandfolklore.blogspot.com/2016/06/little-people-and-swamp-spirits-in.html



June 27, 2016

So we had beautiful summer weather this past weekend. The sun was shining, the birds were singing, and there wasn't a cloud in the sky.

I suppose I should have gone out roaming through the woods looking for monsters or exploring historic old cemeteries (or maybe just going to the beach), but instead I decided to update the blog. Hopefully those of you out roaming through New England will find this week's information helpful, particularly if you are in Vermont.

Over the last year or so I've been researching the various fairies that make their homes in New Enlgand, and I realized I didn't have much information about Vermont. With it's rounded Green Mountains and dense woods I knew there had to be some fairies living up there!

There is a little bit of information floating around on the web, but I found a decent written source in William Haviland and Marjory Power's *The Original Vermonters* (1981), a book which summarizes anthropological and historical information about the Abenaki. The Abenaki were the Indian groups who lived in Vermont before the Europeans came, and who still live there today.

Haviland and Power describe quite a few mythical beings, but two of them seem particularly fairy-like. One of them is called simply "the swamp spirit" or "swamp creature." The swamp spirit was seldom seen, but could often be heard crying from the swampy areas where it lived. Lone travelers were the most likely to hear the creature's cries.

The authors claim this being was "more mischievous than malevolent," but then go on to say it liked to lure children into swamps where it either kept them forever or just outright killed them. This sounds malevolent to me, and it did to Abenaki parents as well, who warned their children to stay away from swamps. I've tried to avoid swamps most of my life - too many mosquitoes - and now I have one more good reason!



Me looking at a swamp. Stay away!

The other fairy-like creature Haviland and Power discuss are the Manogemassak, a name which they translate simply as "Little People." Happily these beings are much less malevolent than the swamp spirit.

The Manogemassak live in rivers and tend to avoid humans as much as possible. This is easy for them to do because of their unique anatomy. The Manogemassak are incredibly narrow, and their faces are described as being as thin as an axe blade. They are so thin that they can only be viewed in profile, not when faced head on. This makes it quite hard for humans to see them.

The Manogemassak also travel in stone canoes, and when humans approach they will submerge under water like a submarine. Stone canoes don't sound practical, but they work just fine if you are a magical being, and they feature in several American Indian myths from New England. For example, the gigantic culture-hero Glooskap was said to travel by stone canoe.

Although the Manogemassak are quite hard to see their handiwork is easy to find, particularly near Button Bay on Lake Champlain. The shores of Button Bay are littered with small round stones which the Manogemassak allegedly make (and which give the bay its name).

The website Native Languages includes a little more information about the Manogemassak. For example, it notes that they sometimes make small clay sculptures that look like animals or people. Finding one of these is considered lucky. The site also claims that geometric markings on rocks indicate a dwelling of the Little People, and that curious humans should stay away.

So, in summary, stay away from swamps and away from rocks with odd markings. Helpful advice for safely enjoying summer outings in the New England woods!

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Loose Lemur Attacks Woman Outside Her Home

cbslocal.com

CBS Miami

July 18, 2016 5:18 PM

MIAMI (CBSMiami) – A 21-year old showed off painful injuries she received when she says she was attacked by a lemur outside her home.

Victoria Valledor's little sister snapped pictures of the animal outside their home off SW 56th Terrace and 140th Place on Monday.



A 21-year old showed off painful injuries she received when she says she was attacked by a lemur outside her home. (Courtesy: Celia Rodon)

"My 21-year-old sister was leaving the house when the lemur jumped on her and bit her so she had to call 911 and the lemur started chasing her around and then when 911 came the lemur started chasing them around too," said Isabella Valledor.

The victim's grandmother Celia Rodon says she ran to get a banana and gave it to the lemur to get its attention but the animal, once again, grabbed a hold of the victim.

Miami-Dade Fire Rescue as well as FWC's captive wildlife division responded to the scene.

"Through tricks and practice and a lot of training they were able to coax it to a kennel and they removed the lemur from the scene," said Lorenzo Veloz with FWC.

FWC says it's unknown where the lemur came from.

"Due to the area where we are, there are people licensed to have these lemurs so now it's under investigation," said Veloz.

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Heal the Bay warns against swimming in the Los Angeles River | mackin | Radio 102.3

Posted July 27th, 2016 @ 2:30pm

iheart.com

Radio 102.3 - Alternative Radio For Portland

LOS ANGELES (CNS) - Heal the Bay warned the public today against swimming in the Los Angeles River, after a study found high levels of bacteria in the water at two popular recreational spots.

The nonprofit has long monitored water quality at beaches, and in recent years has turned its attention to studying fresh water recreational spots around Los Angeles, including swimming holes in the Santa Monica Mountains.

Last summer, Heal the Bay looked into the water quality of the Los Angeles River, taking samples from river recreational zones at the Sepulveda Basin area and Elysian Valley, where kayaking and other activities has been permitted in recent years.

Katherine Pease, the author of Heal the Bay's study, said that while bacteria levels varied in the samples, “overall they were quite high."

At the Sepulveda Basin recreation zone, the water samples contained levels of the fecal-related bacteria, Enterococcus, that exceeded federal standards in all instances, while the samples at the Elysian Valley zone showed levels of the bacteria exceeding federal standards half of the time, Pease said.

One of the sites in the Elysian Valley, Rattlesnake Park, also had a 67 percent rate of exceeding standards for E. Coli, according to Pease.

The presence of fecal indicator bacteria means there is a risk of contracting ear infections, as well as respiratory and gastrointestinal illnesses, from the water, according to the Heal the Bay report on the study.

Pease said Heal the Bay is urging the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to include in its $1.3 billion plan to restore the river measures that would improve water quality.

Heal the Bay's report also contained the following recommendations and precautionary measures:

-- adults and children should avoid swimming and submerging their heads in the river water, and if they do touch the water, to wash it off with soap;

-- when kayaking and angling, avoid getting water on the face or entering the water with an open wound or after it has rained;

-- groups organizing recreational activities at the river should offer information about the water quality in several languages; and

-- the city of Los Angeles and other governmental bodies should conduct testing of the water at least once a week during recreational seasons and at all locations where people are known to go swimming.

The Los Angeles River is classified by the state as “impaired waters" due to bacterial pollution, and the river currently must adhere to a bacteria total maximum daily load, or TMDL, limit, according to the Heal the Bay report.

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Love Locks fence to be removed, portion to go on display

July 20, 2016 yahoo.com

PORTLAND, Maine (AP) — A landmark in Maine where thousands of people have pledged their everlasting love to another with padlocks has been deemed a public safety risk and will be removed.

The Portland Press Herald reports (http://bit.ly/2a84sdn) the city's 30-foot-long Love Locks fence will be removed in the next two weeks but a portion will be displayed in a nearby parking lot.

People attach padlocks to the fence, viewed as a symbol of love like one removed in Paris. The city-owned fence is near Portland Harbor and has been sagging under the weight of hundreds of locks.

City spokeswoman Jessica Grondin says a portion of the chain link fence came loose from its frame about two weeks ago.

The replacement fence won't allow locks to be attached to it.

___

Information from: Portland Press Herald, http://www.pressherald.com

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World's Worst Magician's Awful Trick Goes Badly Wrong On Live TV

huffingtonpost.com

Don't try this at home!

07/04/2016 12:21 am ET | **Updated** 5 days ago

- Ed Mazza Overnight Editor

OUCH!

A magic trick went badly wrong on live television in Poland last week, ending with a co-host of the morning show "Question for Breakfast" having her hand impaled on a nail.

Magician Marcin Poloniewicz, who has appeared on "Poland's Got Talent," placed a nail in one of four paper bags, mixed them up and smashed one with his hand.

Then, he invited "Question for Breakfast" co-host Marzena Rogalska to smash one.

It didn't go as planned when the spike went right through Rogalska's hand:

In a video posted on Facebook showing her bandaged hand, Rogalska said the injury wasn't too bad and she didn't need stitches.

She also defended the magician, who appeared in the clip with her.

"He didn't mean for this to happen," she said in Polish, according to CNET.

The website also reported that the trick was performed in rehearsal without incident.

(h/t Sydney Morning Herald)

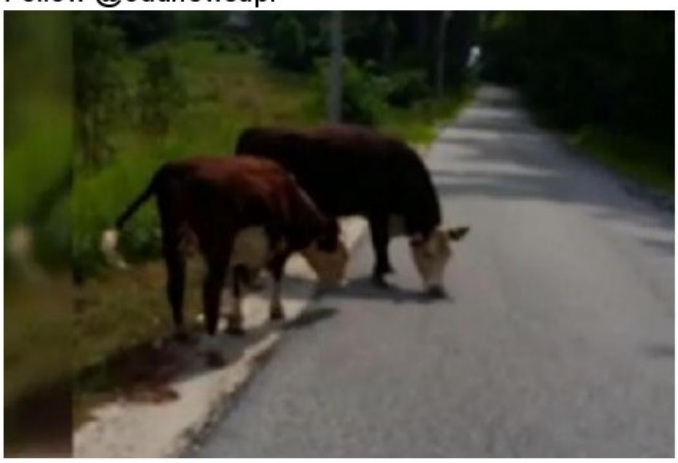
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Maine police officer to cows: 'Don't run from me, I'm the police'

upi.com

By Ben Hooper | Aug. 5, 2016 at 12:22 PM
Follow @oddnewsupi



A Maine police officer chases after a pair of escaped cows. Screenshot: Boston Globe

WINDHAM, Maine, Aug. 5 (UPI) -- A Maine police officer dealing with a "possible mad cow situation" in Massachusetts filmed his encounter with the disobedient bovines.

The Windham Police Department posted a video to Facebook that was recorded on the cellphone of Officer Ernest MacVane when he responded to a report of two loose cows wandering into a road.

"We got a possible mad cow situation here," MacVane says in the video. "We're gonna handle this."

"Hey you guys, just step over to the side of the road, put your hands up," MacVane tells the cows. "Don't run from me, I'm the police!"

The cows flee the officer, nearly colliding with a mailbox in the process.

"That's booze, leave it alone," the officer says as one of the cows stops to sniff at a bottle in the road. "It's not good for you."

The video ends with the laughing officer calling for backup.

It was unclear whether the cows were eventually captured.

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One man's trash is another man's transplant
05:48 EST, 16 June 2016 | dailymail.co.uk

Daily Mail .com
MailOnline US - news, sport, celebrity, science and health stories

The maverick scientist who's making ears out of APPLES: Bizarre project could grow cheap body parts from leftover produce

- **Growing organs from stem cells would help solve organ shortage**
- **But traditional methods for growing organs are complex and expensive**
- **A Canadian inventor and scientist is attempting to solve this problem**
- **His lab has come up with a way to implant human cells into apples**

By Abigail Beall For Mailonline

Rooting through bins is not normally a behaviour you would expect to see from a successful scientist.

But Andrew Pelling, a Canadian 'biohacker', breaks convention in more ways than one.

The scientist bases his research on being inventive, and has recently published a paper explaining how apples can be used to grow human body parts.

Scroll down for video



Andrew Pelling, a Canadian 'biohacker', breaks convention in more ways than one. The scientist bases his research on being inventive, and has recently published a paper explaining how apples can be used to grow human body parts

STAYING CREATIVE

Mr Pelling said staying creative with science is difficult. 'It takes a lot of work. I honestly believe that being unconventional and creative isn't something that "just happens",' he told MailOnline.

'We set up conditions to either foster and grow that spirit or conditions that kill it. So I surround myself with fascinating and energetic people, give myself and other permission to "play" and constant ask myself if my plan/idea/decision etc could be even more audacious.

'This may not come naturally for all people, but if you try it, after a while it becomes easier and a more likely way for you to operate.

'And the end product is an ability to always be thinking in a way that is different from most, which means you come up with a lot of new and unusual ideas.

'Most of them fail though! But you have to at least try them. Every now and then some will work out and they are usually gold.'

Mr Pelling's work is focused around the idea of using trash to find treasure.

He says playing around is how he trains his mind to remain unconventional.

'It's not some creepy thing,' said Mr Pelling, at a recent TED Talk. 'I'm usually just looking for old electronics, stuff I can take to my workshop and hack.'

The 'mad scientist', as TED calls him, runs his own lab at Ottawa University, the Pelling Laboratory for Physical Manipulation.

One of the lab's latest projects involves creating 'human' ears out of cells taken from apples.

The ears cannot hear like those in a human, but are the same shape and contain human cells, or 'scaffolding'.

Pelling and his lab did not set about with the intention to grow ears from apples.

The idea stemmed from a conversation they had about Audrey II, the giant monster flytrap from the musical Little Shop of Horrors. They wondered whether they could grow the monster in the lab.



Mr Pelling's wife carved apples into the shape of ears, then took them to the lab where the scientists treated them to turn the apple cells into human cells. Apples carved into the shape of human ears, ready to be implanted with human cells, pictured



'We took a totally innocent Macintosh apple, removed all the apple cells and DNA and then implanted human cells,' Mr Pelling said. 'And what we're left with after removing all the apple cells is this cellulose scaffold'

PLAYING WITH SCIENCE

Mr Pelling's work is focussed around the idea of using trash to find treasure, because he says playing around is how he trains his mind to remain unconventional.

'It's not some creepy thing,' said Mr Pelling, at a recent TED Talk. 'I'm usually just looking for old electronics, stuff I can take to my workshop and hack.'

'the stuff that I've built that's all around me on this stage and the other projects my lab is involved in are all a direct result of me playing with your garbage,' he said.

'Play is a key part of my scientific practice. It's how I train my mind to be unconventional and to be creative and to decide to make human apple ears.'

Lab member Daniel Modulevsky started working with leaves, removing their cells from the cellulose scaffold that gives plants their structure.

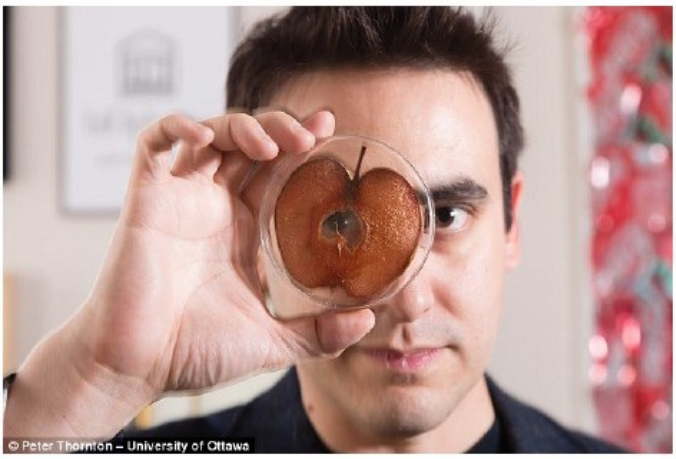
But he had trouble when it came to stripping the leaves' waxy coating. When he spotted another lab member eating an apple one day, he decided to use apples instead.

'We took a totally innocent Macintosh apple, removed all the apple cells and DNA and then implanted human cells,' Mr Pelling said.

'And what we're left with after removing all the apple cells is this cellulose scaffold.'

Mr Pelling's wife carved apples into the shape of ears, then took them to the lab where the scientists treated them to turn the apple cells into human cells.

The scaffolds can be implanted in the body, according to a recent paper Pelling and his colleagues published in the journal PLOS One.



Mr Pelling (pictured) started a company, Spiderwort, which has developed machines to help other people make these scaffolds and has made the technology open source, with the instructions available online

HOW THE PELLING LAB MADE HUMAN EARS FROM APPLES

The researchers took cells from an apple and removed the apple cells and DNA.

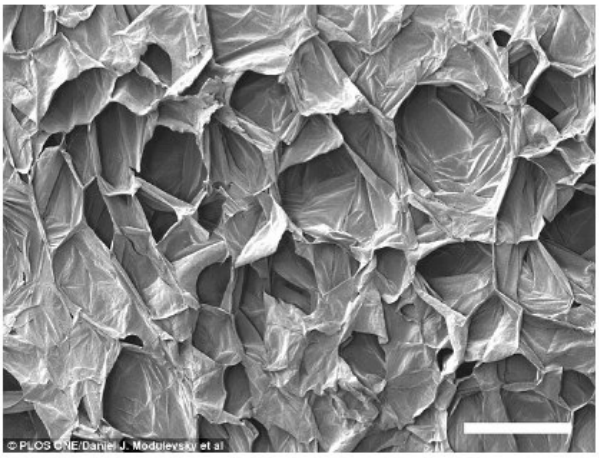
After this, what was left wasthe 'cellulose scaffold' which gives plants their shape and texture.

Removing the apple cells left what appears as holes in microscope images of the apples.

Scanning electron microscope image of a similar cellulose scaffold revealing its three dimensional nature and large cavities. Scale bar = 200 μm

Then, the researchers implanted human cells into the samples.

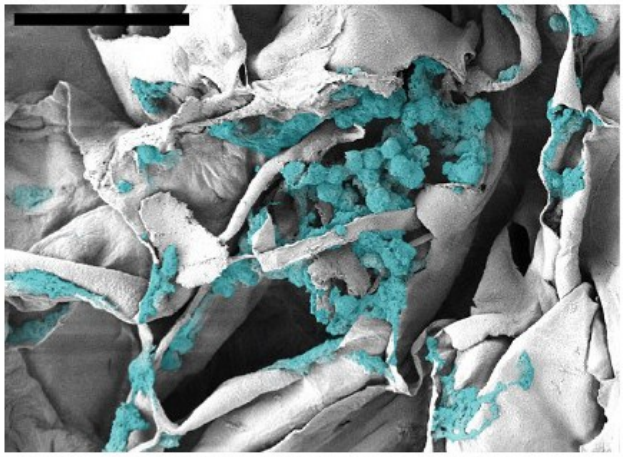
These human cells can be seen as the blue parts in the image below, taken by a scanning electron microscope, after staining reveals the human cells.



At first this was done using a strip of apple, in an ordinary shape.

Then, Mr Pelling's wife carved apples into the shape of ears.

These ears were taken to the lab where the scientists treated them to turn the apple cells into human cells.



SEM image of a cellulose scaffold cross section after being seeded with human cells that were allowed to proliferate for four weeks. The cells were digitally colourized in order to increase contrast between the cells and cellulose structure (Scale bar: 50 μm)

The significance of this project lies in how cheap apples are compared to other ways of building body part scaffolds.

'Commercial scaffolds can be really expensive and problematic, because they're sourced from proprietary products, animals or cadavers,' he said. 'We used an apple and it cost pennies.'

'We founded a mission-driven company, and we're developing kits to make it easier for anyone with a sink and a soldering iron to make these things at home.'

Mr Pelling's company, Spiderwort, has developed machines to make these scaffolds and has made the technology open source, with the instructions available online.

The technology is not for sale yet, but pre-sale information can be found on the company website.

Being able to grow organs from a patient's own stem cells would help the worldwide organ shortage.

Scientists are well on their way to making specialized stem cells that could be seeded onto a scaffold and become livers, or hearts, or skin.

But one challenge remains, which is the scaffolds themselves. Since traditional methods, which involve building them from animals, cadavers or proprietary materials, are complex and expensive.

The lab is also looking at other produce, like asparagus, which could help repair spinal cord injuries.

'What I'm really curious about is if one day, it will be possible to repair, rebuild and augment our own bodies with stuff we make in the kitchen.'

Mr Pelling said staying creative with science is difficult.

'It takes a lot of work. I honestly believe that being unconventional and creative isn't something that "just happens"," he told MailOnline.

'We set up conditions to either foster and grow that spirit or conditions that kill it.

'So I surround myself with fascinating and energetic people, give myself and other permission to "play" and constant ask myself if my plan/idea/decision etc could be even more audacious.

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'And the end product is an ability to always be thinking in a way that is different from most, which means you come up with a lot of new and unusual ideas. Most of them fail though! But you have to at least try them. Every now and then some will work out and they are usually gold.'



The lab is also looking at other produce, like asparagus, which could help repair spinal cord injuries. Andrew Pelling pictured, holding asparagus

- PLOS ONE: Apple Derived Cellulose Scaffolds for 3D Mammalian Cell Culture
- Andrew Pelling: This scientist makes ears out of apples | TED Talk | TED.com
- spiderwort.bio/p...

Comments (34)

redskelf, Bexhill, United Kingdom, about 2 hours ago

'The ears cannot hear'. Really? No ears can hear.

blue_fish, Hampshire, about 2 hours ago

Nothing like nibbling on your partners apple ears.

bob, China, China, about 8 hours ago

you don't hear with that part of the ear anyway... DM.

KevinBailey, Cambridge, about 9 hours ago

Core blimey...

Joe Blow, bamf, United States, about 11 hours ago

Shouldn't he be making them out of corn?

wheres sybil, over here, United States, about 10 hours ago

Good job Joe, you were quicker on the button than me! Hahaha

Truckdog, Aberdeen, United Kingdom, about 15 hours ago

I,ve seen this new technique where they make ears from LUG WORMS.

ally, Glasgow, about 17 hours ago

On the home page of the DM is says scientist "whose" making ears out of apple. That was enough for me, didn't even read the article. I see it has been fixed when you click on it but too late!

Talia62, Earth, United States, about 17 hours ago

"The ears cannot hear like those in a human..." Such a stupid comment. It's not that part of the ear that does the hearing anyway!

ItWasntMe, Cloud Cuckoo Land, United Kingdom, about 10 hours ago

You could point out this observation to DM, but I think it would fall on deaf ears.

blue_fish, Hampshire, about 2 hours ago

I think you mean deaf apples :)

Miss Estella, Satis House, Estonia, about 17 hours ago

.....EAR EAR !

Grumpy Grandpa, Livingston, United Kingdom, about 18 hours ago

Don't want one of these if Mike Tyson is about.

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Man busts out of transport car, leads police on 45-minute chase

By

pjstar.com



Journal Star

SOUTH ROME — An 18-year-old man being transported between juvenile prison facilities kicked the window out of a car Friday morning as it was driving along Illinois Route 29, escaped and led police on a 45-minute chase before being caught.

Officers from the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice, the Peoria Police Department, the Illinois State Police and the Chillicothe Police Department, as well as deputies from the U.S. Marshal's Service and the Peoria County Sheriff's Office, searched the 14000 block of River Beach Road where Lasion L. March was found trying to hop a freight train.

Barb Hoffman, who lives nearby, said she saw March near a neighbor's trash cans before he bolted toward the train. Another neighbor, Don Trent, said it appeared March tried to grab a handle on one of the train's boxcars as it was whizzing by, but missed. March was then arrested by Illinois State Police Lt. Kenny Mullen near the train tracks.

March had been living in Peoria on a form of supervised release. The DJJ had issued a warrant for his arrest Tuesday as he hadn't been abiding by the rules of the program. When Peoria police arrived at his house, located in the 2300 block of North Atlantic Avenue, he was "non-compliant" and resisted arrest, according to Peoria County Jail records. He had been in the jail for three days until Friday, when DJJ officers came to transport him to the facility in St. Charles for processing, said Mike Theodore, a DJJ spokesman.

The 911 call came about 9:10 a.m. from the two DJJ officers who were driving on Illinois Route 6 when March started to kick out the back window of the car. They stopped in the South Rome area of Route 29, near Layne Crossing, just south of Riverview Road, where the man bailed out of the car and ran over the railroad tracks and toward the Illinois River and the houses. He went to at least two homes trying to get a hammer or other tools to break his leg shackles and a restraint belt that kept his hands near his side, police said.

Somehow he was able to break the belt, which was recovered by officers after he was caught.

The man was taken to Peoria County Jail, where he was to be booked on charges of escape and criminal damage to state-supported property. March was previously sentenced to juvenile prison in a Peoria County burglary case. It wasn't clear Friday when he was initially sent to the DJJ or how much time he has left on his sentence. Typically, juvenile sentences end no later than a person's 21st birthday.

Theodore said March would now go through the department's "due process" system for any charges that arose out of the Friday morning incident. That would also apply to the resisting arrest incident earlier this week, he said.

***Andy Kravetz** is the Journal Star public safety reporter. He can be reached at 686-3283 and akravetz@pjstar.com. Follow him on Twitter @andykravetz.*

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By Greg Newkirk on 06/17/2016 weekinweird.com



Week In Weird

Man Dies While Watching The Conjuring 2, Viewers Report Ghosts Following Them Home From Theater

If you went to see *The Conjuring 2* in theaters this weekend and survived, you should count yourself lucky. Viewers of James Wan's horror sequel aren't just reporting ghosts following them home from the theater, some of them are dying during the film's climax.

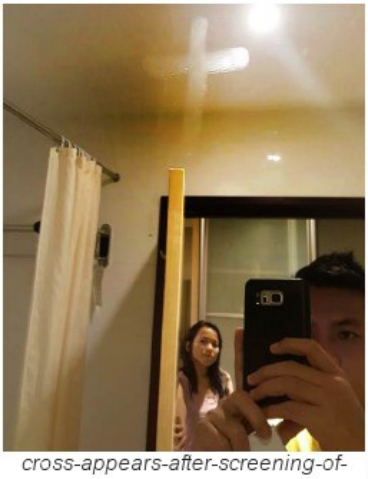
On Tuesday, a 65-year-old man collapsed during the climax of *The Conjuring 2*, during which **famed demonologists Ed and Lorraine Warren battle the demonic nun Valak**. The man had complained of chest pains during the climactic scene, only to lose consciousness in his seat. He was later pronounced dead at the hospital.

Sure, it could be a coincidence, but here's the weird part: hospital employees claim they have no idea what happened to the man's body.

Hospital staff told the man's theater companion to escort the body to a local medical college hospital for postmortem, only for him to disappear with the corpse.

The odd death is just the latest in a string of strange events surrounding the release of *The Conjuring 2*, the most common of which are claims that viewers have left the theater only to return to haunted homes.

On Jun 10, one man claimed that he'd returned from a screening of the film only to discover that a fresh cross had manifested across his hotel bathroom's mirror.



cross-appears-after-screening-of-the-conjuring

Mysterious cross manifests on hotel bathroom mirror | Via Facebook

"We came back to the hotel room at about 2:30am," he posted to Facebook. "As we were too beat, we decided to nap first. At about 2:45am, Legacy Voronia decided to brush her teeth before continuing her sleep. After brushing her teeth, she came out of the toilet asking me if I pranked her with a cross drawn on the mirror in the toilet. I was puzzled, as I was resting on the bed all the while and I thought she was trying to prank me. We then realized that we were not pulling pranks at each other. I then went to the toilet to check out the cross… It was freshly drawn, as I could see water creeping down on one side of the cross, and the stain is still fresh. I then asked her how that could be me when she was the one standing in front of the mirror all the time. Furthermore, if I were to do that, she would not have miss my presence."

The couple claim that they fled the room and immediately requested a change with the front desk. When they returned for their things the following morning, the smudged cross had disappeared.

I left the theatre got home only to fine my dinner was cooked for me?! Thank god I've got a boyfriend

48. DOG8GOD

06/19/2016 at 9:05 PM

Ed Warren was a more modern version of the spiritualists of the 1920s. They put on shows to make money. This is a movie, pure fiction. It's actually pretty weak at the end because it's got all but the pea soup spewing out of her. It's basically a modern retelling of the exorcist without the priests. Very well built up from the start, but turns into just another exorcism movie. Not that interesting.

- Lacey

  06/20/2016 at 11:55 AM

  Thanks for the review. Exorcism movies are hard for me to take seriously, especially when they are over the top with visual effects and/or have a heavy religious agenda. I've been interested in the Enfield case but think I'll try to find another version of the story, one without rogue demons in nun costumes.

- Crystal Wilson

  06/22/2016 at 3:41 PM

  Wasn't there a movie on Hulu made some years ago called the Enfield Haunting? I watched it a couple years ago. They then claimed it was based in truth also.

49. Clardy

06/20/2016 at 3:57 AM

I came home and was laying in bed a few hours after the movie. Suddenly this feeling came over me like my blood was boiling and I was going to pass out and I had severe chest pain. I told my husband something wasn't right. I ran to the bathroom because I felt like I was going to be sick and he followed me to make sure I was okay. We heard our dog start barking in the other room, which was weird, because she was muzzled. We went back to the bed and she chewed through her muzzle and was going crazy barking at nothing. We put another muzzle on her to try and get some sleep, and then went back to the bathroom because I was still feeling nauseous. In less than 30 seconds later, she had chewed through the second muzzle. It was so fast we were like how the hell could she do That? It was too fast. We took a look at the muzzles and it looked as though they had been cut off her face, not chewed through. We got back in bed and watched some tv to fall asleep, only to immediately have a cockroach crawl out from behind the tv up the wall to the ceiling. We are clean people and have never had pests. I felt like death, it was awful and the puppy could sense it too.

50. Dan W

06/20/2016 at 11:05 AM

When a movie is based on a true story, it is embellished a lot. You can take a story of some kid eating ice cream then dropping it on the sidewalk. The movie version of that true story would end up with an Earthquake following the ice cream hitting the sidewalk because it was made from dark matter…etc. The kid DID drop the ice cream after all, so that is true!

51. Dick

06/21/2016 at 9:52 AM

Since I read Guy Lyon Playfair's book about this years ago & I don't remember any demon nuns in it, I wonder, has anyone asked Mr. Playfair about what he thinks of this film, another alleged "true story" that probably isn't true at all? Why are humans so damn credulous?

- Crystal W

  06/22/2016 at 3:44 PM

  There wasnt a demon nun…lol.. The story was creepy enough without that addition.

52. Melonie H Jones

06/22/2016 at 9:36 PM

My teenage son and I watched it last night. After the movie, he complained of cold and numbness on both hands but only his ring fingers and pinkies. Definitely strange.

53. r0bz

06/23/2016 at 8:56 PM

It wasn't bad, I'd give it a 7/10. The nun thing was bit ridiculous but still a decent movie. About as scary as Amityville 3 IMO, nothing special happened, watched alone. I did need some water since it was like 90 degrees and after over indulging needed to take a piss lol

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the conjuring employed catholic priests to bless audiences during screenings

Warner Bros. employed priests to bless The Conjuring screenings | Via Twitter

When the first film premiered in theaters back in 2013, Warner Bros. made news for employing real-life priests to bless freaked-out audiences during the screenings. Sounds like a few exorcisms might have been a good idea this time around as well.

If you're planning on catching *The Conjuring 2* in theaters this weekend, you might want to bring a crucifix with you just in case.

Have you experienced anything strange after watching *The Conjuring 2*? Can a horror film really kill you? We want to hear from you! Like us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter, or start a conversation in the comments below!

Greg Newkirk

68 Comments

1. Dana Newkirk

06/17/2016 at 8:03 PM

Yikes.

2. Cynthia J Campbell

06/17/2016 at 8:08 PM

Thats odd. I was really gassy afterwards

3. Jose Beyer

06/17/2016 at 8:10 PM

Totally awesome movie!!! Made me jump several times off my seat.

4. Patty Aguero

06/17/2016 at 8:13 PM

Really, it was good but not that scary

5. Jazmina Alva

06/17/2016 at 8:24 PM

Fuck idk if I should see it nos

6. Kyrstie McGuire

06/17/2016 at 8:24 PM

Lane Morse, this movie is getting out of hand..

7. Betty Dupont Miller

06/17/2016 at 8:26 PM

OoooOoh

8. Lee Moore

06/17/2016 at 8:30 PM

William Castle lives!

9. Betty Dupont Miller

06/17/2016 at 8:44 PM

Hmmm…hand out cards?

10. Melissa Gerber

06/17/2016 at 8:47 PM

This just sounds like publicity stuff.
Now, people will go, just to see if a ghost follows them home.

- Jonathan Strauss

  06/23/2016 at 9:17 PM

  Yah

  - Aria

    07/03/2016 at 7:54 PM

    Exactly and that's not good cause what if something really follows them home? Some things are not to be played with. I don't think they should release that movie on dvd

11. Mattie Moss

06/17/2016 at 8:51 PM

Gimmicks like they used for most Vincent Price's movies back in the day

- Samuel

  06/26/2016 at 5:41 PM

  The demon portrayed in the movie (valak) looks nothing like the one portrayed in the dictionarie infernal, it looks more like the engineers from the movie Prometheus!

12. Angelica Gray-Lawson

06/17/2016 at 8:53 PM

Lol. So, this happens during the climax of the movie. So, can we at least say that the poor man died during climax?

13. Crystal Maxwell

06/17/2016 at 8:55 PM

Wow.. Lol it was really scary.

14. Kevin Collier

06/17/2016 at 9:04 PM

Crazy

15. Delia Summerfield

06/17/2016 at 9:25 PM

I saw the name Smurl in another article about the Warrens. Didn't think it was that common!

16. Jennie Lallier-Rickard

06/17/2016 at 9:28 PM

Woah!

17. Jeremy Belles

06/17/2016 at 10:14 PM

carin is a good friend of mine she is part of the Smurl family that your thinking of

18. Peggy Stricklin Larson

06/17/2016 at 10:18 PM

Pussy

19. Venesa Fielden

06/17/2016 at 11:29 PM

My husband keeps torturing me with that creepy demons name and image. We live out in a very rural area. Not cool.

20. Taryn Shannon

06/17/2016 at 11:32 PM

I'm fine. No ghosts.

21. Debbie Gustafson

06/18/2016 at 1:59 AM

Give me a break they looking for money

22. Sandy Scarrci

06/18/2016 at 2:18 AM

Kristina Katherine check this out before you guys go see this and please DO NOT take the CHILDREN…please!!

- Kristina Katherine

  06/18/2016 at 3:13 AM

  I wouldn't take them

23. Roger Moore

06/18/2016 at 2:32 AM

Haha

24. Frances Peete

06/18/2016 at 2:46 AM

Not! Lol!

25. Melissa Olson Patrick

06/18/2016 at 4:16 AM

Nobody followed me home

26. Donna Malmborg

06/18/2016 at 4:29 AM

Wusses!

27. Kate

06/18/2016 at 4:29 AM

We went to see this on Tuesday 14th June, only problem we had, was the idiot in front tellin us to stop screaming lol

28. Marion

06/18/2016 at 5:44 AM

I watch it 3 time , and I'm medium and I removed demon spirits

29. Travis Humphries

06/18/2016 at 6:09 AM

Saw it last weekend. Not that Scary and nothing has happened too Us. Not the Best movie and not the Worst Movie

30. Maureen Waugaman

06/18/2016 at 6:38 AM

As I am infatuated with the other side, I must say this movie was a nail biting, eye closing, edge of seat, screaming kind of movie. Well done to all

- Dick

  06/21/2016 at 9:49 AM

  You're infatuated with the other side? Hmmmm…well, I suppose the good news is that sooner than you think, you'll be there. Do you think that, once you cross over, you'll then be infatuated with this side?

  - TheHate

    06/23/2016 at 5:14 PM

    Shut up moron loads of people have massive interest in the after life who are you to tell them otherwise? Hope when you pass over you suffer a terrifying limbo for eternity!

31. Martha Hopkins

06/18/2016 at 4:55 PM

That Norma Bates can screeeeeeaaaaammmm

32. Theron Moore

06/18/2016 at 5:25 PM

Great marketing team at work here. Money well spent…

33. Corina

06/18/2016 at 11:24 AM

We watched last Saturday. It was scary but none the less I loved every minute of it. We came home and straight to sleep. Nothing happened other then having a weird scary dream with the nun Valek.

34. Arika

06/18/2016 at 1:50 PM

I went and saw the movie with a friend and it made me feel nauseous through the whole movie, so being a huge Christian I prayed in the name of Jesus that no demons were to be in or around my body and since then I stopped feeling nauseous and could continue watching the movie. It might just be a movie, but demons are real people and they are not to be played with

- Stephanie

  06/18/2016 at 10:40 PM

  Arika. I am a christian too and I regret watching this movie. I felt INCREDIBLY nauseous. I thought I was going to throw up, shortly after I prayed with my boyfriend and asked the LORD to forgive me. I really didn't think that the movie would be that scary. It was really strong. I have never been afraid of a scary movie. I was literally shaking in my seat, but I know the LORD is good and I too rebuked demons and fear.

  - Benny

    06/23/2016 at 12:37 PM

    Wow

- Jack

  06/20/2016 at 10:54 PM

  U should understand there are greater problems in life than a fucking demon/devil . Also u should know that ALWAYS ALWAYS THE LIVING HAS MORE POWER THAN THE DEAD(IF THEY FUCKING EXIST) .

35. Bloomer Lips

06/18/2016 at 1:53 PM

ugidy…googidy…….BOO !!!!!!!!!! BAHAHAHA !!!!!

36. Alan Clifford

06/18/2016 at 11:52 PM

Man emits bullshit at a theatre. Lots of people experience bullshit on their way home form the cinema.

37. Ghostbiker

06/18/2016 at 6:33 PM

This is hysterical! Get a grip people. You stupid sherp.

- Peoplearedumb

06/19/2016 at 9:18 AM

Its not. I refuse to see this one but after watching the first conjuring in my home, very strange and negative stuff began to happen. My Mom kept hearing growlinf in her face, I heard something heavy breath in my face at night, we heard things drop randomly in our kitchen, i kept fucking up at work constantly and never did before so my Managers were confused. I literally had to sage/bless my house. Im guessing this could have come from the chanting they did in the first scene of the movie..after all the name is the CONJURING. You people find this entertainment, but the day you deal with a real demon your going to shit your whitey tighteys

- Nathan DiYorio

06/21/2016 at 6:03 PM

"The day you deal with a real demon…"

Been there, done that.
Still think scary movies are entertaining.

- Daniel

06/19/2016 at 7:27 PM

38. Chelsea

06/18/2016 at 7:40 PM

I saw it tonight and as I was watching the movie I started feeling sick my stomach started to hurt and so did my head I had to leave the theater

39. Phil

06/18/2016 at 9:55 PM

Demons are not people, but they are beings of pure intelligence–fallen angels–and are totally selfish and hate God and those He gave the possibility of being with Him in such a special way (adopted into His family) in the worst way.

40. Simran

06/18/2016 at 11:24 PM

I had fever after watching this movie. I don't know what's wrong but this seemed odd

41. Julia Maher

06/19/2016 at 7:46 AM

I also saw a video the other day of someone getting 'possessed' after the movie was over!!

42. Diane cortese

06/19/2016 at 2:28 AM

As I left the theatre I could see my breath. It was not cold at all. I kept breathing out my mouth and saw white mist each time, indoors, in the hall before getting to the lobby. A day later a heavy glass spice jar flew horizontally straight for 3 feet, hesitated a few seconds and then dropped to the floor. I laughed and shrugged off. Not afraid. It was just a bit unnerving.

43. Karl slattery

06/19/2016 at 3:51 AM

The worlds gone nuts I

44. Jeanette Hickens

06/19/2016 at 11:26 AM

IT IS REAL!!!! As I walked into the theater I felt this chilling, dark sensation creep all over my body. I knew something was not right, but I have faith in the Lord God Almighty and baby Jesus. My youngin started acting a damn fool and projectile vomiting on the people in front of us. Turned out he was possessed by the devil himself. I shit you not. I had to perform an exorcism in the middle of the movie. I truly saw a light shine down from above and the hand of baby Jesus touch my little boy. All is well in the hood after that moment. I thank God everyday for his many blessings and for saving lil Bobbert.

45. Jen

06/19/2016 at 4:45 PM

Saw it, I'm a jumpy person and I had to close my eyes in some scenes haha. I hadn't been to the movies for years so I wasn't used to the loud volume which is what made the BOO! type scenes scary for me, plus the nun was creepy, that spiritual stuff creeps me out haha. I got a stomach ache hours after the movie and nausea, probably due to eating 600 calories of popcorn and chocolate. I have noticed myself causing a bit of hysteria for myself if I'm alone at night, like in the shower I don't wanna close my eyes and imagine that stupid demon nun. But I haven't seen a horror movie for ages and like I said, spiritual/demonic ones are my weakness. But I only felt creeped out after reading silly stories (most probably made up) about what happened to people after they saw the movie. I didn't think if the movie or the nun until I read that garbage.

46. Ann Bombay

06/20/2016 at 1:43 AM

They probably cursed the movie and the evil joke is on the people who go see it.

47. Daniel

06/19/2016 at 7:22 PM

Man Swims In 1,500-Gallon Pool Filled With Coca-Cola And Mentos

huffingtonpost.com

"This is something that you wouldn't even see in the movies."

06/26/2016 06:26 pm ET

- Nina Golgowski Trends reporter, The Huffington Post

How's this for an American dream?

Some visionaries recently filled a 1,500-gallon pool filled with Coca-Cola, 200 pounds of ice and a bucket of Mentos, creating a larger-than-life cocktail that will haunt your dentist's dreams.

In a four-minute video uploaded to YouTube Friday, video blogger Taras Maksimuk, who posts under the name TechRax, shows off the toxic-looking pool, noting: "This is something that you wouldn't even see in the movies."

As if the sugary mixture's ripples weren't enough of a sight, they pour in the ice and Mentos candy — achieving a mild fizz — followed by a brave human test dummy named Ryan.

With a dramatic leap, Ryan splashes into the murky water and pops open a 24-ounce bottle of Coke like it's Champagne. He only hesitates when he's asked to go completely under. (We don't wonder why.)

Though his style of entry was impressive, it's worth noting how long he soaked for.

"Ryan stayed in the pool for roughly 20 minutes and didn't notice any significant changes to his skin or hair other than feeling really sticky," Maksimuk told The Huffington Post via email Sunday. "But he said his skin felt very smooth in the pool."

The backyard where the scene was filmed suffered a different fate, however.

"The cola was all dumped out in the grass and then thoroughly washed with water, however, a horrible smell still reeks in the backyard a week after disposal," Maksimuk said.



TechRax/YouTube
Ryan soaked in the Coke-filled pool for 20 minutes, his videographer said.

Of course, its seems no video by TechRax is complete without the destruction of some kind of technology.

So, as if to spark a nuclear war in the video's comment section, TechRax's crew intentionally crashes a DJI Phantom 4 drone into the pool. The camera

watches as the four-figure toy sputters in the liquid and dies.

“That is what my youtube channel revolves around; technology destruction,” Maksimuk defended. “It is something that is a part of every one of my videos.”

And the sensationalism appears to work (just check out his iPhone destruction videos). This one has been seen more than 8 million times in two days.

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It's so hot in New York that manure is bursting into flames

cbs6albany.com

By Associated Press Thursday, July 28th 2016

THROOP, N.Y. (AP) -- How hot is it in upstate New York? So hot that horse manure is bursting into flames.

The state Department of Environmental Conservation says it received multiple complaints July 5 about the smell and smoke emanating from a burning pile of horse manure at a property in the town of Throop, in the Finger Lakes region 20 miles west of Syracuse.

The responding officer learned that the owners of a horse stable had been storing the manure in large piles that frequently spontaneously combusted in the excessive heat and dry conditions.

DEC officials say a shift in the prevailing winds carried the odor of burning manure into the neighbors' windows.

It took three local fire departments two hours to douse the burning manure.

AP-WF-07-28-16 1328GMT

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Albany, NY

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The Market for History's Infamous Murder Weapons

David A. Graham

theatlantic.com

Where the instruments of tragedy go, ethical quandaries often follow.



- Adam Chandler
- Aug 1, 2016

Fifty years ago today, Charles Whitman, a 25-year-old engineering student and former Marine armed with a small arsenal of weapons, killed 13 people and wounded over 30 more during a shooting rampage atop the University of Texas Tower in Austin. The episode casts a long and complicated shadow. It is considered by some to have marked the beginning of the era of mass shootings; for others, the armed civilians who engaged Whitman that day suggest one way to limit the scope of such attacks. (As survivors and mourners gather to mark the anniversary on Monday, a campus-carry law that allows firearms in university buildings in Texas will also go into effect.)

For some hobbyists and weapons collectors, the anniversary might inspire different feelings and thoughts than it does for most people. Less than two years ago, the Remington 700 rifle used by Whitman that day went up for sale with an asking price of $25,000. According to reports, at least three bids for the rifle were issued. And though its sale to a private collector didn't come without some outcry, it was at least the third time that the rifle had changed hands.

History's more infamous weapons don't always end up in private collections, but those that do reveal a far-reaching market for the macabre. After a protracted legal battle, Jack Ruby's .38 Colt Cobra revolver, which he used to kill Lee Harvey Oswald just two days after the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, was sold for $220,000 in 1991 and nearly went up for auction again in 2008. Meanwhile, in the weeks after Kennedy's death, Marina Oswald found herself in negotiations with John J. King, a Colorado oil baron and gun collector, over the Mannlicher-Carcano rifle thought to have killed the president. The two agreed on a price of $45,000, contingent upon her ability to deliver the rifle, but the federal government interceded and the weapon is now catalogued in the National Archives in Washington, D.C. A replica of the rifle remains on display at the Sixth Floor Museum in Dallas, Texas.

One person whose work requires navigating the murky waters of commerce and crime is Wes Cowan, an appraiser and auctioneer in Cincinnati and the host of PBS's *History Detectives*, which ran from 2003 until 2014. "We don't sell, quite frankly, and we have rejected selling firearms that were used in the commission of any modern crime," Cowan says when I ask him about the auctioning of Whitman's rifle.

But what happens once a crime ceases to be modern? As an example, Cowan offers that if weapons used in the 1929 St. Valentine's Day Massacre became available, he would probably facilitate their sale. "It's a very, very squishy area," Cowan says. "How much time is enough time? There is the passage of time that takes place when one of these weapons that was used in some heinous crime could become more historically significant than sociologically significant." In other words, there is no formula to determine whether or when an item is more meaningful in a historical sense than it is a relic of tragedy or trauma. "I think the bottom line is that it's fairly subjective," Cowan says.

As a gauge, I ask Cowan about the hypothetical sale of the Charter Arms .38-caliber pistol used by Mark David Chapman in the murder of John Lennon, which happened over 35 years ago in 1980. "I'm not sure we would do it," Cowan offers, "but I guarantee some auctioneer would do it." It's unlikely that such a sale will take place in the foreseeable future; Chapman's firearm is currently held in a ballistics cache at a Queens police facility.

The fate of Chapman's weapon is revealing of how the rise of certain police procedures has reduced the accessibility of firearms used in modern crimes. "I think it's important to realize that most of the historic outlaw or

criminal weapons that appear on the market were also guns or weapons that were collected before there were such a thing as police evidence rooms, where stuff disappeared into and never came out of." Cowan explains. "I think it would be very unlikely that a weapon that was used in a modern crime would ever get out of a police evidence room."

There are exceptions. Earlier this year, Cowan's company, among others, received calls from George Zimmerman, who was looking to auction the gun he used to kill Trayvon Martin in 2012. Citing the obvious ethical and moral objections, neither Cowan nor his associates returned the call.

Speaking to Reuters in 2016, Herman Darvick, who helped facilitate the sale of Jack Ruby's pistol in 1991, suggested that a museum would be the most appropriate place for Zimmerman's weapon. In many cases, that's exactly where weapons used in notorious shootings tend to end up. The Deringer used by John Wilkes Booth to kill President Lincoln remains a centerpiece at Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C., along with the bullet removed following the autopsy. In Memphis, an annex of the National Civil Rights Museum contains the rifle used by James Earl Ray in the murder of Martin Luther King, Jr., as well as the room in which Ray fired it.

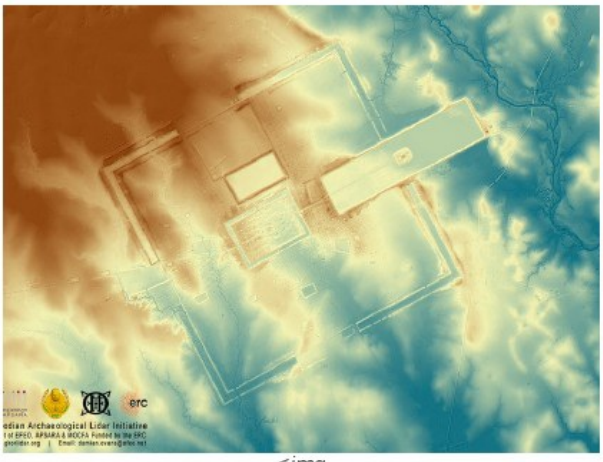
These displays have their detractors as well. Following the sale of Charles Whitman's rifle in 2014, it was anonymously loaned to the National Museum of Crime and Punishment in Washington, D.C., where it was featured along with some of Whitman's typed notes. The exhibit drew the ire of survivors of the attack and family members of the victims. "The dadgum thing should be put in a smelter and done away with. End of story," said Ramiro Martinez, one of the Austin police officers who confronted Whitman in the tower, told the *Dallas Morning News* at the time. Even five decades later and even with money absent from the equation, the object itself is still plenty controversial.

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Laser Scans Reveal Massive Khmer Cities Hidden in the Cambodian Jungle

smithsonianmag.com

Using Lidar technology, researchers are discovering the extent of the medieval Khmer empire



<img src="http://thumbs.media.smithsonianmag.com//filer/95/dc/95cb269-4590-aad8-4180bbf72b83/preah_khan.jpg__800x600_q85_crop.jpg" alt="Preah Khan" itemprop="image">

Preah Khan of Kompong Svay as seen by Lidar (CALI)

By Jason Daley
smithsonian.com
June 14, 2016 10:20AM

The temple-city of Angkor Wat in central Cambodia is one of the most popular tourist attractions in Asia. At one time, it served as the capital of the Khmer empire that ruled most of southeast Asia between the 9th and 15th centuries. But a recent study reveals that Angkor Wat is just a piece of the Khmer legacy. Laser scans conducted last year show that the area is studded with undiscovered archaeological sites, including a city in the jungle that may be larger than Cambodia's current capital city Phnom Penh.

According to Lara Dunston at *The Guardian,* archaeologist Damian Evans, research fellow at the École française d'Extrême-Orient and leader of the Cambodian Archaeological Lidar Initiative, attached a laser scanning system known as Lidar to helicopter skids. Similar to radar, Lidar—short for light detection and ranging—pelts the terrain with laser beams, collecting data that later makes a high-definition picture of the ground beneath the vegetation below. Because many of the structures built by the Khmer were made of wood and other biodegradable materials, they have disappeared and been covered by the jungle. But Lidar is able to detect mounds of earth, foundations, walls, roads and other permanent structures not visible through the thick vegetation.

Evans' project, as described in the *Journal of Archeological Science*, surveyed 734 square miles of terrain over 90 hours. The results revealed entire population centers and temple complexes hidden in the jungle.

"We have entire cities discovered beneath the forest that no one knew were there," Evans tells Dunston. Though a previous Lidar survey uncovered part of the city in 2012, the 2015 survey reveals Mahendraparvata's true size.

Travis Andrews at *The Washington Post* reports that one of the biggest surprises for Evans was discovering a medieval city near the temple of Preah Khan of Kompong Svay, about 60 miles east of Angkor.

"We had spent a decade on the ground … looking for a city that we figured must be around somewhere … surrounding this temple," Evans tells Andrews. "All of a sudden, the city has more or less instantly appeared on the screen in front of us. It had been hiding in plain sight. A city that we figured wasn't there just appeared."

Though researchers have not yet visited and examined many of these remote sites, the aerial study is already rewriting history. Peter Sharrock of London University's School of Oriental and African Studies tells Dunston that the results of the aerial survey show that the complex of Khmer cities, temples and canals makes it the largest-known empire on earth during the 12th century.

Evans says that the survey also changes the story of the mysterious collapse of the Khmer empire. He tells the Associated Press that historians believed the Khmer migrated to cities in the south when Thai armies began invading their northern stronghold. But his survey shows there are no large cities in the south, calling that idea into question.

The sheer complexity of the Khmer empire and its ability to terraform their surroundings might be what impressed Evans the most about the find. The Khmer cleared thousands of acres of forest, diverted river and produced a water system centuries ahead of its time.

"The broad conclusion to draw from this is that we've underestimated how much humans have shaped their environments," Evans says.

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Maumee River Monster

blogspot.com

Maumee River Monster is a river monster also known as river dragon. First reported in Napoleon, Ohio. On September 13, 1902, many persons have seen the animal, and its appearance is accurately described. In form the creature is said to be somewhat like a river lizard, although considerably larger. It has been seen on the banks of the Maumee River and appears to move as easily on the land as in the water. The principal feature about the animals' body is a huge tail, covered with minute scales like a fish. It also has two small, web-shaped feet, possibly six inches in length. Its eyes are very small, set far apart, and are of a peculiar greenish color. The whole body of the creature seems covered with a coarse, heavy hide of a dull brown color.

It is almost impossible to give anything like the exact measurements of the animal, but it is estimated that the creature is nine or ten feet long, and would measure anywhere from 24 to 30 inches in height, while its body would measure perhaps 14 inches across. Some one who has seen it has remarked, "if there is such a thing as a cross between an alligator, a lizard and a snake, I believe our river 'haunt' would exactly fill the bill."

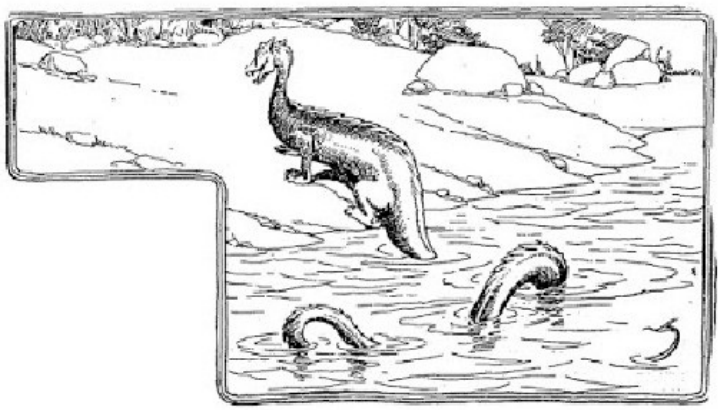


Illustration of the Maumee River Monster

Parts of the body of the animal are ill proportioned, giving it a squatty appearance when seen at its full length. Characteristics of both the water and land are mingled at times very noticeably together, and it is impossible to classify the creature with any accuracy. The name it has come to bear along the river if the "river Dragon," although who first suggested the mystic creature of superstition as its namesake, it would be impossible to say. The home of the animal is on Savage's Island, about 12 miles below here. At that point there is a series of rapids in the Maumee River, and it is supposed that the animal was washed into the river from Lake Erie, into which the stream empties, a short distance below. In parts the island is covered by a thick shrubbery, reaching to the water's edge, but although the ground has been carefully explored, no trace of the lurking place of the animal could be found. It is now believed that the creature inhabits a cave in the island, entrance to which is effected from the river, the water concealing all trace of it. The theory of the pioneer of this section was that there is a vast honeycomb of caverns in this vicinity, many of which are below the bed of the river, and it is believed by many that the animal makes its home among these passages.

At that time, party of fishermen were rowing home about dusk from their day's sport, when suddenly in the vicinity of Savage's Island one of them uttered a low exclamation of terror and dropped his oars. The attention of the others was attracted by his actions, and the course of the boat was stopped. Directly on a jutting point of the island, hardly 40 feet away, lay an animal, the sight of which could well inspire fear. In the gathering gloom the weirdness of the creature's appearance was intensified. "It reminded me more of a huge snake than anything else," one of the party afterward said. Its head was turned toward the occupants of the boat, and

suddenly it raised itself, giving the startled watchers a vivid idea of its size, and plunged into the water with a tremendous splash. This move was enough, and the men bent to their oars heartily. But the creature evidently had no idea of attacking them, for that was the last seen of it that night.

The story the party told of their encounter with the strange creature of the river aroused wide interest, but although a close watch was kept on that section of the river, nothing further was seen of the animal until nearly a month afterward. On this occasion the view was obtained in much the same manner was before, and the creature dived into the water almost instantly on being sighted, but the previous story was corroborated, and that the Maumee River contained a strange sea animal was no longer doubted.

No signs of other animals of the same kind have been seen in the vicinity, and it is the common supposition that the creature is alone, although what became of the former "dragon" and how this one succeeded in effecting an entrance to the river unseen, are questions it seems impossible to answer. There, however, seems to be several of the creatures in existence somewhere, as the two experiences here can hardly have been with the same one. [Bay City [MI] Times 14 June 1903: p. 18]

In the 1970's, the man who reported it was Sam McConnish, who claimed he saw the river monster and a Thunderbird. It usually is said to look like Nessie or a giant catfish, though it's stated to be a serpent more often than a giant catfish. In 2009 a man who was by the mouth of the Maumee River reported a large sea serpent like monster and it had quickly disappeared into the water.

Sources:

http://hauntedohiobooks.com/news/10962/

http://cryptidz.wikia.com/wiki/Maumee_River_Monster

Pic Source:

http://hauntedohiobooks.com/wp-content/uploads/river-dragon-of-the-Maumee-River.jpg

Written By Tripzibit on May 13, 2016 | 01:24

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Internet Abuzz Over Photo of Mike Pence's 'Vampire' Daughter

David Emery 7 hours ago
7 hours ago

snopes.com

http://www.snopes.com/2016/07/18/mike-pence-vampire-daughter/

The

snopes

Internet wants to know why Charlotte Pence's reflection isn't visible in a restaurant mirror.



Twitter

An otherwise unremarkable snapshot of Republican vice presidential candidate Mike Pence, his wife Karen, and his daughter Charlotte in a Chili's restaurant in New York City has garnered more than its fair share of buzz because Charlotte Pence's reflection seems to be "missing" from the mirror beside their table.

At first glance, the scene does seem odd. The back of Karen Pence's head is visible, and Pence himself can be seen in semi-profile in the mirror, but not a trace of Charlotte Pence, who is seated right beside her father, is reflected.

Predictably, social media speculation ranged from the conspiratorial to the paranormal:

@mike_pence @Chilis Photoshopped? Daughter has no food or reflection in the mirror.

— Michael Richardson (@Michaelcvusd) July 18, 2016

@mike_pence @Chilis @cheflife206 I'm either tripping, or his daughter is a ghost. She has no reflection in the mirror. #TheHauntedElection

— Mr. Nelson (@Mister_Seattle) July 18, 2016

Is your daughter a vampire @mike_pence

— Pookleblinky (@pookleblinky) July 17, 2016

@mike_pence@Chilis the chick on the left of Pence is a ghost.....creepy.....

— holly wilson (@hwilson2009) July 17, 2016

Some bemused commenters felt compelled to express their puzzlement in diagram form:

But the general tone of this chatter was humorous and lighthearted, thankfully. Few, if any, of the users who



CnieaK5UsAEmlZf

shared and commented on the photo seemed seriously concerned about what was obviously an optical illusion — that, simply put, given the angle of view and the relative positions of Pence and his daughter in relation to the mirror, we can't see Charlotte Pence because her father is between her and us in the reflected line of sight.

So, why all the fuss? One likely explanation is that after a week full of truly horrific news — the terrorist attack in Nice, the police killings in Baton Rouge — the Internet just needed to blow off steam. Maybe it needed something harmless and non-threatening to obsess about, however silly. Oftentimes, stress relief can be found where you least expect it, which isn't necessarily a bad thing.



diagram

Mike Pence was expected to be confirmed as Donald Trump's running mate during the 2016 Republican National Convention, which kicked off Monday, 18 July 2016 in Cleveland, Ohio.

Last updated: 18 July 2016

Originally published: 18 July 2016

Featured Image: Twitter

David Emery is a San Francisco-based writer and researcher who has covered online hoaxes and rumors since 1997.

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Mischievous 'ghost child' captured on terrified homeowner's CCTV

12:37, 28 Jul 2016 Updated 13:00, 28 Jul 2016 By Keyan Milanian

mirror.co.uk

A terrified homeowner claims to have caught the creepy moment a mischievous ghost childflung his gate open

Chris Mitchell-Clare said CCTV cameras pointed toward his drive caught a spook leaving his swing gate open.

Now he has posted the footage on Facebook and admitted he had heard rumours about a death in his home years before he moved in.

The Sunshine Coast Daily reports he said: "What happened was I went into my workshop yesterday morning to check a couple things and noticed the single gate was open on the security camera .

"I went to ask around the family if they closed it and locked it the night before, they all said yes, so I questioned the camera, checked outside and the gate was open.



Facebook / Chris Mitchell-Clare

The 'ghost' can be seen in the first few seconds of the video, when a glitch appears

"My instinctive feeling was to check for footage in case anyone entered the property at night as we have had some slow drive-bys lately.

"I checked through all the footage and saw this within a few minutes, I called to my mother who I live with as she uses upstairs and I use downstairs in our property here, and said, 'check this out', within a matter of seconds the gate just bursts open without even swinging and you can clearly see no swinging movement of the gate.

"I said to her I'm putting it straight on Facebook, so I copied it to a shared folder I had on the network and uploaded it using my laptop - it's raw unedited footage.

"During the split second of interference what looks like a child pushing the gate open for a split second but not being there a split second before or even a split second after."

But critics claim the clip is a fake because the time stamp before and after the film glitch is different by a few days.

Chris Mitchell-Clare claims to have heard rumours about a death in his house before he moved in The home owner said strange goings-on had occurred in the house

However, Mr Mitchell-Clare claims the stamps are not an issue, saying: "Some people have been getting confused with the time stamps on it.

"The one on the top right is actually on the camera's software itself. This honestly I never setup



Facebook / Chris Mitchell-Clare



Facebook / Chris Mitchell-Clare

myself so it hasn't been touched. When the cameras were installed they were integrated with a DVR which is the time stamp in the top left, which is the one I refer to, as each camera is named through the DVR for future reference.

"If you're skeptical then that's your decision, but to me, I've seen to believe that this is just something most cannot explain."

He said he had been told about a death in the house but had never been able to confirm the stories.

He added: "I've only been living in this place for the last year and my security cameras have picked up strange things happening so I was suspicious when I saw the footage and what looked like a kid standing at the end holding it."

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Missouri's Mysterious Spook Light

Mary's Weird World

There are many weird and wild things in our world. Explore some of them with me.

Sunday, July 21, 2013

Though it's usually referred to as the Joplin Spook Light and sometimes as the Hornet Spook Light, this mysterious glowing ball is associated with Oklahoma as well. Its story goes back more than a hundred years.

Apparently this light is only seen on Devil's Promenade Road located approximately 12 miles southwest of Joplin, Missouri. It is capable of changing colors, though it is usually orange. It is round, varying from baseball to basketball size. It invariably is seen traveling from east to west along the four-mile stretch of Devil's Promenade Road, and it is said to appear every night, usually between ten o'clock and midnight.

Some witnesses say that it spins at high speeds down the center of the road, then rises and hovers above the treetops before disappearing. Others have said that it sways from side to side. It has even been reported to appear inside cars.

The earliest reports of the spook light date from 1836 when it was supposedly first seen by Native Americans moving along the infamous Trail of Tears. The first published report was in 1881 in a pamphlet called the "Ozark Spook Light."

There are several legends associated with the Spook Light. One tells of a man who got lost in the woods and never made it home. His wife took a lantern and set out to look for him, but in vain. She set out night after night look for her missing husband. Eventually she died, but each night, according to the story, her ghost sets out with a lantern in a vain search for her man.

The oldest legend seems to be that of a Quapaw Indian maiden and her lover. Her father would now allow the young couple to marry, so they ran away. As pursuing braves closed in on them, the couple leaped to their deaths above the Spring River. The light was supposedly born that night and represents the ill-fated lovers.

The Spook Light has, of course, been the subject of extensive investigations, both by paranormal investigators and scientific organizations, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. No one so far has come up with a satisfactory explanation. Among the theories are natural gas, electrical charges which may be originating from the nearby New Madrid Fault. So far, however, none of the possible explanations can be proven.

Although apparently it defied attempts to photograph it for many years, photos and even video have recently begun to emerge. There's a great video of the spook light here:

Posted by Mary Gindling at 3:51 PM

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Vampire-obsessed trucker arrested for kidnapping in Moorhead...

inforum.com

INFORUM

By Ethan Nelson / The Forum on Jun 30, 2016 at 6:01 p.m.



Timothy Jay Vafeades

SALT LAKE CITY—A vampire-obsessed Utah trucker accused of keeping women as sex slaves as he trucked cross-country, a case sprung open by his arrest in Moorhead, pleaded guilty Thursday, June 30, a few days before his federal trial was about to begin.

Timothy Jay Vafeades was charged in the Utah case with luring two women aged 18 and 19 to his truck, grinding down their teeth while holding them prisoner for months and beating and sexually assaulting them. Prosecutors have said he had four other victims throughout years.

He faces up to 20 years in prison as part of the deal. A sentencing hearing is set for Nov. 2.

Vafeades was arrested in November 2013 after his semi was stopped at a weigh station on Interstate 94 a few miles east of Moorhead. Authorities learned through a routine check that a protection order barred him from being with the 19-year-old, a female relative. Police also noticed bruises on her face.

The female relative told police Vafeades was obsessed with vampires and had named his trucking company Twilight Express. In addition to filing down her teeth and making her wear dentures, she said Vafeades sexually abused her and wouldn't let her leave the truck's cab without holding her hand. She said he kept several pairs of dentures with him, including a pair with two front teeth sharpened into vampire fangs.

The lifetime protection order was issued in Florida in 1999. Vafeades' lawyers have said police shouldn't have arrested him in Moorhead because the protective order was no longer valid.

After his arrest in Moorhead, an 18-year-old woman came forward. The 18-year-old told authorities he kept her for around three months, forcing her to have sex with him. Prosecutors said that Vafeades, 56, had four other victims over decades.

He is accused of sexually assaulting two other women nearly daily in the 1990s, prosecutors have said he beat another woman daily in the early 2000s.

Vafeades pleaded guilty to two charges of transporting a person in interstate commerce with intent to engage in criminal sexual activity. Charges of kidnapping and child pornography were dismissed.

Mortality in Wax: Hellish Tableaus from the 17th & 18th Centuries

cultofweird.com

Cult of Weird

Museum of Oddities and Obscurities - www.cultofweird.com

Cult of Weird

By Charlie Hintz on June 16, 2015

Italian wax relief sculptures from the 1600-1800s depict death and the battle for the mortal soul.

Morbid Anatomy recently shared an entry posted to the Victoria and Albert Museum's blog last October called Welcome to Hell! with some incredible and macabre depictions of death in wax. These highly detailed and unnerving scenes were *memento mori*, serving as reminders of mortality.

Here are some of the gruesome wax reliefs in the museum's collection:



Damned Soul Wax relief



Damned Soul wax relief

"Damned Soul" wax relief done in the style of Gaetano Giulio Zumbo, Italy, ca. 1670-1700.

Group of four coloured wax reliefs, possibly by Giovanni Bernardino Azzolino, Italian, probably 1620s. Showing (from top left): Soul at Death; Soul in Purgatory; Blessed Soul; Damned Soul.



Souls at death and purgatory

Time and Death, wax relief, Naples, 1700-1740, attributed to Caterina de Julianis, Italy (probably Naples), before 1727.

Photos and info via Victoria and Albert Museum

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souls-wax-relief-2



Time and Death wax relief

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Does Moscow have a real-life Batman?

ottawasun.com

SUN+ First posted: Thursday, July 07, 2016 12:48 PM EDT | Updated: Thursday, July 07, 2016 01:10 PM EDT

A real-life superhero in Moscow who dresses in a hooded cloak and cape has claimed to have taken down 40 criminals so far.

He calls himself Reaper, and was seen in June walking into a known drug house in the Khimki area outside the city. Witnesses said they heard screams, crashes and bangs, and then captured the masked man on video as he walked out. He's seen lighting a flare on the steps and then disappearing into the darkness.

When police arrived, witnesses told local media they walked out with a pair of suspected drug dealers in handcuffs. They say the men looked beat up.

> Reaper gonna cut you down pic.twitter.com/jgOEGE7Gg4
>
> — Jnec Grim Reaper (@JnecReaper) July 6, 2016

Reaper also apparently wrote a letter to police recently.

"You don't know me, and it is unlikely you have heard about me," Reaper writes in the letter, published by Russian newspaper Moskovsky Komsomolets, which could not verify the author. "I call myself Reaper, and for the past six months I have been struggling with the disease that has long been plaguing our society - crime. I fight drug dealers, rapists and gangs."

Much like Batman, Reaper promises he doesn't "kill or cripple" and wants to work with police, but feels corruption has addled them from doing a proper job on their own.

"I'm not looking for glory and I'm not looking for allies or imitators. I'm just asking for some help with information."

He even has a Twitter account to act as a tip line, where his motto is "redivivus et ultor" -- Latin that loosely translates to "Revive and avenge."

POSTMEDIA

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Mummified remains of extinct monster cat discovered - but what is it?

express.co.uk

SUNDAY EXPRESS

sunday_express_logo

Mummified remains of extinct monster cat discovered - but what is it?

A GIANT cat-like creature which may be the mummified remains of a now extinct animal has been discovered in a basement.

By Sean Martin
13:29, Tue, Feb 9, 2016 | UPDATED: 13:40, Tue, Feb 9, 2016



CEN



CEN

Mystery surrounds the three-foot long specimen, found in an old cellar in Nigde, Turkey.

Experts claim it may be a prehistoric creature, but have so far been unable to give an accurate dating on it.

The ancient feline-looking creature is longer than a standard cat, with bigger ears and bigger teeth, which has experts stumped about its origins.

Dr Aydin Topcu, natural history professor at Ni?de University, said: "We are examining pictures of the skeleton and it seems to be a carnivore.

"But we need more time conduct further tests.

"After the examinations we will be able to tell what species it belongs to and of which period of time it is."

The beast is now on display of the shop of the person who found it – Abudllah Ozturk who is a locksmith in the area.

He said: "I called two archaeologist friends who came and examined the skeleton.

"They told me that it belongs to a very old species which is probably extinct but they couldn't identify it and they didn't know which species it belonged to."

However, Dr Lidija McKnight, an Egyptologist at the University of Manchester has a more feasible explanation.



CEN



She said: “It looks like one of the naturally mummified cats we find in Britain -bricked up in chimneys - for example.

“The tarsel/carpel bones look long which is diagnostic of feline species.

“One metre is quite long, but if it's a species of wild cat for example, they can be much larger than domesticates.

“The teeth are a bit weird, but if the soft tissues have record through the desiccation process, they may just look more pronounced.”

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Man commits murder after removing prosthetic leg with ankle GPS

WASHINGTON fox4news.com

FOX

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Instead of cutting off or removing the bracelet, however, which would have alerted authorities, police said Quincy Green found a new way to dupe the tracker - he took off his leg.

By: Paul Wagner

Posted: Jun 21 2016 09:16PM CDT

Updated: Jun 22 2016 11:50AM CDT

- A review is underway at the District's Pre-Trial Services agency after a GPS monitoring device was incorrectly placed on a man's prosthetic leg.

That man, 34-year-old Quincy Green, took off his leg and committed a murder.

Dana Hamilton was shot to death on Southern Avenue last month and police had no suspects for six days until someone dropped a dime on Green. He was fitted with the GPS device after he had been arrested for carrying a pistol without a license.

Top fox4news.com Searches

After receiving the tip on Green, police checked camera footage from the surrounding area and according to a nine page affidavit the gunman was spotted, with an obvious limp.

Authorities filed a search warrant and inside Green's residence officials recovered a box from the living room, inside the box was a prosthetic leg with a GPS tracking device. A device record showed that it had barely moved in a 72 hour period.

"Very simply it was human error," said Cliff Keenan, the Director of the Pre-trial Services Agency for the District of Columbia.

This agency monitors defendants facing charges in court.

"The contract through which we have contracted for services includes putting onto the individual defendants the actual GPS bracelet and one would assume that the person doing the installation would know not to put it on to a prosthetic device, we don't know what the company has been able to find out about how this happened under these particular circumstances other than it was a violation of protocols," said Keenan.

The district did away with cash bond years ago and instead defendants are released on their own recognizance or fitted with one of the GPS tracking devices from Sentinel Services of California.

"With this company over the last three years we have had nearly five thousand placements of GPS devices on individuals," said Keenan. "As of today we have about 480 people in the community with a GPS device this is the first time the company or I have heard of this incident or this kind of incident

happening".

An incident that's also angered the DC Police union.

"From what I understand the device has to be put skin to device and they sent somebody out to put this device on and it's not touching its skin," said Russell Mullins, Jr., Executive Steward, DC Police Union. "I guess our biggest concern is we are out there every day putting our life on the line for citizens and making sure they are safe and then someone turns around and does something like this that lets them back out."

The court affidavit says that in the days leading up to the killing, Green, was seen several times near the intersection of Chesapeake and Southern. The exact location he was told to stay away from, indicating the GPS device he was supposed to be wearing was somewhere else.

The motive for the murder is still unclear.

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Mysterious Booms Have Small California Town Looking to the Sky

2016-07-20 go.com

- By CATHERINE THORBCKE

Jul 20, 2016, 1:38 PM ET

A mysterious booming noise in a small California town has residents baffled, and has sparked many conspiracy theories.

Every weekday, between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., a thunderous noise rocks through Sonora, California, according to locals.

The cause of the mysterious booms remains a mystery, with local residents pointing to everything from mining operations to aliens.

Zika Mystery: Elderly Patient Transmits Virus to Caregiver
'World's Saddest Polar Bear' Suffers for Selfies at Chinese Shopping Center

Glen White, a local teacher and geologist who has researched the sound extensively, told local ABC affiliate KXTV-TV that he thinks the noise comes from bombs and grenades exploding.

White said he believes the explosions come from an Army depot outside of Hawthorne, Nevada, about a hundred miles away from Sonora. There, a private company disposes and dismantles old munitions, White said.

“They go through old munitions bombs, grenades, then they destroy them,” White explained, and has video footage to back up his claim.

Ken Thomas, a contracting officer for the Hawthorne Army Depot, told ABC News today that they do detonate munitions regularly at the depot when the munitions are past their shelf-life, but he is not convinced that it can be heard in Sonora.

"It doesn't feel right that what we're doing here would be heard 200 miles away when there's a mountain range in between us," Thomas said. "My office is 27 miles from where they detonate the old munitions, I only hear it here maybe one time a month, and just barely and it's like 'Was that a boom?'"

While White thinks he has solved the town's mystery, he told KXTV-TV he remains open to hearing other people's theories, as long as they are backed up by scientific research.

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Mysterious New Whale Species Discovered in Alaska

nationalgeographic.com

Scientists say a dead whale on a desolate beach and a skeleton hanging in a high school gym are a new species. Yet experts have never seen one alive.

By **Craig Welch**

PUBLISHED July 26, 2016

Like many good mysteries, this one started with a corpse, but the body in question was 24 feet (7.3 meters) long.

The remains floated ashore in June of 2014, in the Pribilof Islands community of St. George, a tiny oasis of rock and grass in the middle of Alaska's Bering Sea. A young biology teacher spotted the carcass half-buried in sand on a desolate windswept beach. He alerted a former fur seal researcher who presumed, at first, that she knew what they'd found: a Baird's beaked whale, a large, gray, deep-diving creature that occasionally washes in dead with the tide.

But a closer examination later showed that the flesh was too dark, the dorsal fin too big and floppy. The animal was too short to be an adult, but its teeth were worn and yellowed with age.

> It's just so exciting to think that in 2016 we're still discovering things in our world—even mammals that are more than 20 feet long.
>
> Phil Morin | NOAA's Southwest Fisheries Science Center

It turns out, according to new research published Tuesday, that this was not a Baird's beaked whale at all, but an entirely new species—a smaller, odd-shaped black cetacean that Japanese fishermen have long called *karasu*, or raven.

"We don't know how many there are, where they're typically found, anything," says Phillip Morin, a molecular geneticist at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Southwest Fisheries Science Center. "But we're going to start looking."

It's rare to uncover a new species of whale. Advances in DNA research have helped scientists identify five new cetaceans in the past 15 years but two were dolphins and most were simple category splits between fairly similar species. This animal, in the genus *Berardius*, looks far different than its nearest relative and inhabits an area of the North Pacific where marine mammal research has been conducted for decades.

"It's a really big deal," says study co-author Paul Wade of NOAA's National Marine Mammal Laboratory. "If you think about it, on land, discovery of new species of large mammals is exceptionally rare. It just doesn't happen very often. It's quite remarkable."

Morin and his team examined the St. George carcass, took bone powder from old museum specimens, and reviewed DNA tests of whales from the Sea of Okhotsk. They studied skulls and beaks and analyzed records from whaling fleets in Japan. They even tracked down a skeleton hanging from the ceiling in a high school gymnasium in the Aleutian Islands.

The scientists conclude in their study published in *Marine Mammal Science* that this type of whale, which has not yet been named, is nearly as far removed genetically from the Northern Hemisphere's Baird's beaked whales as it is from its closest known relative, Arnoux's beaked whales, which swim in the Antarctic Ocean. The differences, in fact, are so dramatic that the animal has to be something else, they say.

"It's just so exciting to think that in 2016 we're still discovering things in our world—even mammals that are more than 20 feet long," Morin says.

This skull of a newly discovered species of whale shows its blowhole vestibule and its nasal and frontal bones.

He is not alone in his enthusiasm. Robert Pitman serves on a taxonomy committee for the Society for Marine Mammalogy, which publishes an annual list of all recognized marine mammal species. He is not among the 16 co-authors on Morin's paper. But at a time when the diversity of marine mammals is shrinking—the Yangtze River dolphin is now functionally extinct and Mexico's vaquita porpoise is dangerously close—Pitman calls the discovery "heartening."

"It boggles my mind to think that a large, very different-looking whale has gone unnoticed by the scientific community for so long," Pitman says. "It sends a clear message about how little we know about what is in the ocean around us."

The discovery also raises new questions about how well humans are understanding the threats posed by marine activities, from energy exploration to sonar use, given that so few people even knew such a creature existed.

Of the 88 recognized living cetacean species, including orcas and humpbacks, bottlenose dolphins and Dall's porpoises, 22 are beaked whales. The largest of those, Baird's beaked whales, also called giant bottlenose whales, can reach 35 to 40 feet (10.7 to 12 meters) and weigh more than 24,000 pounds (10,900 kilograms). They travel in large groups, may dive 3,000 feet (914 meters), and can be underwater for an hour. While beaked whales are still hunted in Japan, little about them is known. In part that's because they spend so much time feeding and exploring vast, deep canyons far from shore.

When the teacher on St. George, a 35-square-mile (91-square-kilometer) island inhabited by 100 people, frequented by hundreds of thousands of seals, and visited by 2.5 million birds, pointed out the dead whale in Zapadni Bay to former seal researcher Karin Holser, she thought it was a Baird's beaked whale. But later, as tides and currents revealed more of the animal, Holser realized she didn't recognize it at all. She consulted a colleague's cetacean identification book and sent pictures to other experts in Alaska.

This skull provided scientists evidence that the whale was smaller and had different bone structure than other beaked whales.

"This dorsal fin was larger, further aft, and had more curvature than that of a Baird's beaked whale,"

says independent ecologist Michelle Ridgway, who arrived on the island days later. "The jaw structure and the shape of the melon were not quite right, either." And this whale, while clearly an adult, was just two-thirds the size of full-grown Baird's beaked whales.

Holser and other island residents measured the whale. Ridgway collected tissue, arranging to ship the slightly fetid samples through intermediaries to Morin's lab in Southern California.

Morin was intrigued.

Just nine months earlier, he'd spied new research by Japanese scientists attempting to describe differences between Baird's beaked whales and a rare black form that whalers had whispered about since the 1940s. Groups of these smaller whales were sometime spotted in Japan's Numero Strait, but only between April and June. There was no record of scientists ever seeing one alive.

The Japanese scientists had speculated in fall of 2013 that this may be an unknown species of beaked whale. But they were forced to draw conclusions from DNA taken from just three of the creatures that had stranded off Hokkaido. They concluded more evidence was needed.

Even before receiving the samples from St. George, Morin had been trying to hunt down more specimens.

He went through NOAA's tissue collection, pulling all 50 or so that had previously been identified as a Baird's beaked whale. Using DNA testing he found that two were actually a closer genetic match to the small black whales tested by Japanese scientists in 2013. One of those was from a whale that washed ashore in 2004 and now hangs in a school gym in Dutch Harbor. Scientists there had long assumed it was a younger Baird's beaked whale.

Morin also took the suggestion of one of the Japanese scientists, who had identified a skeleton from 1948 with an unusual shaped head at the Smithsonian Institution. And he tracked down another skeleton from the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History with body measurements that suggested they were the small black form. Morin took bone powder from both, and tested their DNA. They, too, were a match for karasu.

Along with the whale from St. George, Morin now had found five new specimens that were similar to the three found in Japan.

To describe a new species, however, "you build up lines of evidence, but that's very hard with an animal we've never seen alive," Morin says. But body measurements between Baird's beaked whales and the smaller black creature proved vastly different, as did their DNA.

Baird's beaked whales range throughout the North Pacific from Russia and Japan to Mexico. Genetic variation among Baird's beaked whales was tiny. But for the five new black specimens Morin tested, all initially from the Bering Sea or the Aleutians, the sequences differed from the Baird's beaked whales significantly.

"The genetic variation within the forms was little, while the divergence between them was much larger," Morin says. "That's our strongest argument."

The whale still needs to be formally described and named, and Morin's findings would have to be accepted by outside experts who track cetacean taxonomy. But Pitman and others say the case is strong that it's a new species.

"We're doing increasing damage to our environment, and we can't even begin to conserve the biodiversity we know is out there," Morin says. "Yet there's so much more about our world we don't even understand."

National Geographic

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Mystery ancient human ancestor found in Australasian family tree

2016-07-25 newscientist.com

25 July 2016



Go west? Or go east?

Penny Tweedie/Panos Pictures

By Alice Klein

Who's your daddy? An unknown hominin species that bred with early human ancestors when they migrated from Africa to Australasia has been identified through genome mapping of living humans.

The genome analysis also questions previous findings that modern humans populated Asia in two waves from their origin in Africa, finding instead a common origin for all populations in the Asia-Pacific region, dating back to a single out-of-Africa migration event.

Modern humans first left Africa about 60,000 years ago, with some heading west towards Europe, and others flowing east into the Asia-Pacific region.

Previous research looking at the genomes of people living today has revealed that the Asia-Pacific arrivals mated with two hominin species they found there – the Neanderthals and the Denisovans.

Mysterious ancestor

But when Jaume Bertranpetit at Pompeu Fabra University in Spain and his colleagues analysed the genomes of living Indigenous Australians, Papuans, people from the Andaman Islands near India, and from mainland India, they found sections of DNA that did not match any previously identified hominin species.

These DNA sequences are not present in the genomes of living Europeans or east Asians, suggesting that the ancestors of these people met and bred with a mystery hominin in south Asia or the Pacific region, who left their genetic legacy in the area's present-day populations.

The unidentified hominin may be *Homo erectus or "upright man"*, says Bertranpetit. *H. erectus* is believed to be the first hominin with a similar stature to today's humans, and the first to leave Africa.

Ancient DNA needed

Fossil records indicate that *H. erectus* was present in Asia between about 1.8 million and 33,000 years ago, so there could have been an overlap with humans towards the end of its existence.

"But we do not have any direct evidence," says Bertranpetit. Confirmation would require a match between ancient DNA from *H. erectus* remains and DNA from current Australasian populations.

Unfortunately, none of the *H. erectus* fossils unearthed to date contain sufficient genomic data for this kind of comparison to be made, says Alan Cooper of the University of Adelaide, Australia. "Until

we find a skeleton that is preserved well enough, we won't be able to generate a whole genome like we've done with the Denisovans," he says.

Many groups

The Denisovan genome was derived from a well-preserved finger bone found in a cave in Siberia, but such findings are rare, especially in the hot climate of Asia. "We may never find another preserved hominin in Asia," Cooper says.

Making the story even more complicated is the possibility that multiple unknown hominin species contributed to the mystery DNA snippets, says Cooper. "I wouldn't be surprised – Asia is a bit of a nightmare in terms of the number of different groups that were running around at the same time," he says.

Asia has turned out to have many more hominin forms than Europe, Cooper says.

"There is a tidal wave of studies coming out now on Australian and Asian genomes and they're all concluding the same thing – there was a single out–of-Africa movement of modern humans," says Cooper. "Europeans headed west, and everybody else headed east. And then within Asia, it became horribly complicated in terms of the movement, because there were several hominins floating around in that space – Denisovans, Neanderthals and now this third group."

Journal reference: *Nature Genetics*, DOI: 10.1038/ng.3621

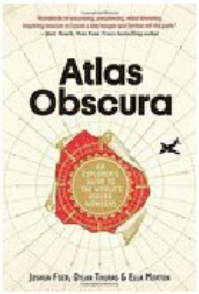
Read more: New species of human may have shared our caves – and beds

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The Mystery Behind the Ozark Spooklight

atlasobscura.com



Mini book a30976e9da7a2492

Even an Army Corps study couldn't determine its source.

June 11, 2016



On the border of Oklahoma and Missouri, just west of a town called Hornet, on a small stretch of backwoods known to locals as the Devil's Promenade, a mysterious, otherworldly light has been haunting travelers since at least as far back as the late 19th century.

Those hunting for the Ozark Spooklight–sometimes also known as the Hornet Spooklight or the Hollis Light–should drive out on Spooklight Road, past the now-abandoned Spooklight Museum, and find a westward facing spot to set up a lookout.

Sit quietly and patiently enough and you'll see it: a glowing ball of seemingly-supernatural energy, variously described over the years in hues ranging from orange to greenish to blue, that appears to float down the road. Sometimes it's said to be a single glowing ball; other eyewitnesses mention a tight cluster of several lights all moving in unison, almost always off in the distance. In at least one account, it seems to "pulsate and change colors."

Local myths offer several related stories to explain the light's presence, many of them tied to the area's native Osage and Quapaw Indian tribes. There are those who say that the Spooklight is the flaming torch of a beheaded Qupaw or Osage Indian (or, in another version, a Confederate soldier) wandering in search of his lost head; others claim that the lights are the trapped spirits of a young Qupaw couple who committed suicide in the nearby Spring River after being forbidden to marry.



Spooklight Road - East 50 Road, Oklahoma - west of the Missouri state line and home to the mysterious Ozark Spooklight. (Photo: Jennifer Wetzel) An image of the Spooklight from the early 1900s. (Photo: Public Domain) An

Less superstitious types ascribe more ordinary origins to the Spooklight: a recent investigation by Allen Rice, an English professor at the University of Central Oklahoma, claimed to conclusively prove that the Spooklight was an optical illusion created by headlights from distant cars refracting across the terrain. This theory is discounted by those who remember that the first mention of the Spooklight was in a pamphlet called *Ozark Spook Light*. The pamphlet was published in 1881–long before the invention of the automobile.

image of the Spooklight from the early 1900s. (Photo: Public Domain) A more esoteric theory speculates that the lights could be the visual byproduct of electrical shifts in the atmosphere, created by large underground metal deposits in the area. Others wonder if it's simply gas being released into the air from the surrounding swampland.

Or maybe it's none of the above: a 1946 study conducted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was unable to determine the Spooklight's origin.

Wherever the light is coming from, it's definitely not an alien portal. Right?

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Batten down the hatches—Navy accused of pirating 585k copies of VR software

arstechnica.com

Bitmanagement Software says Navy "did not license" its virtual reality product.

David Kravets - 7/23/2016, 7:30 AM



Nicolas Raymond

A German maker of 3D virtual reality software is accusing the US Navy of engaging in wanton piracy, and we're not talking about piracy on the high seas. This is about digital piracy of software, according to a federal lawsuit brought by Bitmanagement Software. The company is seeking copyright infringement damages of more than $596 million (€543 million) from the Navy for allegedly stealing more than 558,000 copies of its BS Contact Geo software.

The amount of damages, if the Navy loses, could go up substantially. Bitmanagement also noted that, in addition to licensing fees, it is seeking pre- and post-judgement interest, punitive damages, legal costs, attorney fees, and statutory damages that could amount to $150,000 per infringement.

According to the lawsuit (PDF) filed in the US Court of Federal Claims:

> In 2011 and 2012, Bitmanagement agreed to license its software to the Navy on a limited and experimental basis. those individual PC-based licenses authorities the Navy to install BS Contact Geo on a total of just 38 computers for the purposes of testing, trial runs, and integration into Navy systems. In order to facilitate such testing and integration of the software on Navy computers in preparation for the large scale licensing desired by the Navy, it was necessary for Bitmanagement to remove the control mechanism that tracked and limited the use of the software.
>
> Based on the quality and performance of the BS Contact Geo—including the interactive functionality and high-quality graphics that make it particularly useful to large military organizations—the Navy determined that it would deploy the software on a larger scale, and began negotiations with Bitmanagement for the purchase of numerous additional licenses.
>
> While those negotiations were ongoing, however, and without Bitmanagement's advance knowledge or consent, the Navy installed BS Contact Geo software onto hundreds of thousands of computers. Bitmanagement did not license or otherwise authorize these uses of its software, and the Navy has never compensated Bitmanagement for these uses of Bitmanagement's software.

The government did not immediately respond for comment.

The software maker said its program enables interactive collaboration with "high-quality" graphics that, for example, allows its users to visualize a "virtual military base."

The lawsuit alleges that a Navy procurement official, Alexandre Viana, informed the company that the Navy planned on installing the software on 558,466 computers. But as licensing negotiations continued in 2013, "the Navy was simultaneously copying and installing that software, without Bitmanagement's advance knowledge or authorization, on a massive scale."

The suit says that the software has been deployed on at least "558,466 computers" and "it is likely that this unauthorized copying has taken place on an even larger scale. Bitmanagement has no control over the Navy's computers and cannot prevent further unauthorized copying of BS Contact Geo onto additional computers within or outside the Navy."

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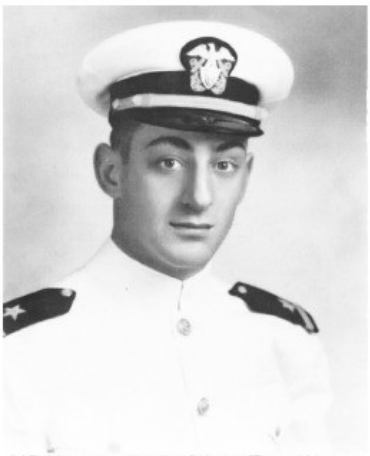
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Navy to Name Ship After Gay Rights Activist Harvey Milk

The U.S. Naval Institute thanks its corporate sponsors:
GENERAL DYNAMICS

Navy to Name Ship After Gay Rights Activist Harvey Milk

By: Sam LaGrone
July 28, 2016 1:13 PM • Updated: July 28, 2016 4:13 PM



US Navy portrait of then Ens. Harvey Milk.

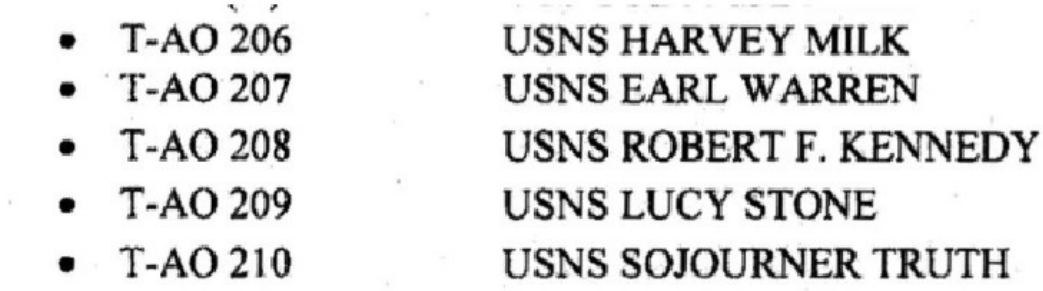
The Navy is set to name a ship after the gay rights icon and San Francisco politician Harvey Milk, according to a Congressional notification obtained by USNI News.

The July 14, 2016 notification, signed by Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus, indicated he intended to name a planned Military Sealift Command fleet oiler USNS *Harvey Milk* (T-AO-206). The ship would be the second of the John Lewis-class oilers being built by General Dynamics NASSCO in San Diego, Calif.

The Secretary of the Navy's office is deferring releasing additional information until the naming announcement, a Navy official told USNI News on Thursday.

Mabus has said the John Lewis-class – named after civil rights activist and congressman Rep. John Lewis (D-Ga.) – would be named after civil rights leaders.

Other names in the class include former Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren whose court ruled to desegregate U.S. schools, former Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, women's right activist Lucy Stone and abolitionist and women's rights activist Sojourner Truth.



Screen Shot 2016-07-28 at 1.10.13 PM

Mabus has also named ships in the past for other civil rights icons, including the Lewis and Clark-class dry cargo ships USNS *Medgar Evers* (T-AKE-13) and USNS *Cesar Chavez* (T-AKE-14).

Milk came from a Navy family and commissioned in the service in 1951. He served as a diving officer in San Diego during the Korean War on the submarine rescue ship *Kittiwake* until 1955. Milk was honorably discharged from the service as a lieutenant junior grade.

Following his service, Milk was elected to the San Francisco board of supervisors and was the first openly gay California politician to be elected to office. He was killed in office in 1978. When Milk was shot he was wearing his U.S. Navy diver's belt buckle.

Over the last several years, there have been pushes from California politicians to have a ship named for Milk since the 2011 repeal of the Department of Defense's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." policy.

Naming a ship after Milk, "will further send a green light to all the brave men and women who serve our nation that honesty, acceptance and authenticity are held up among the highest ideals of our military," said Milk's nephew Stuart Milk in a statement to *San Diego LGBT Weekly* in 2012.


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Researchers discover the first evidence of Neanderthal cannibalism in northern Europe

phys.org

July 8, 2016



The first evidence of Neanderthal cannibalism in northern Europe is discovered

The highly fragmented Neanderthal collection of the third cave at Goyet represents at least five individuals. Dating indicates that the ones marked with an asterisk go back to between 40,500 and 45,500 years ago. Scale=3cm Credit: Asier Gómez-Olivencia et al.

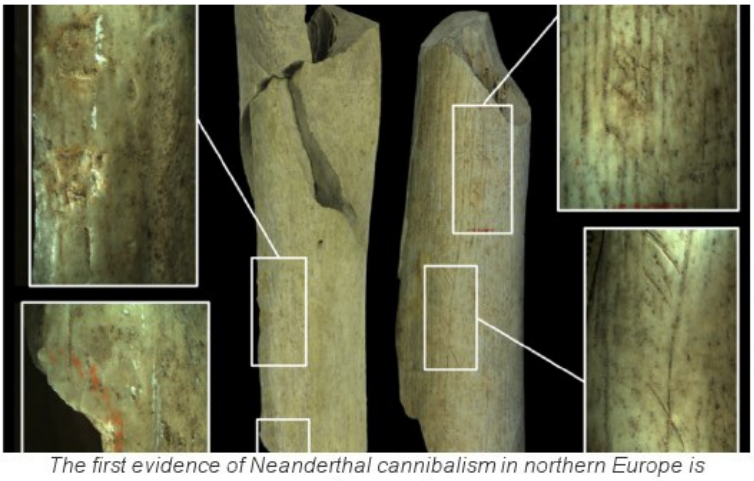
These remains display a large proportion of cut marks caused by stone tools when the meat was cut, and the bones display fractures as a result of having been broken to extract the marrow. Some bones were also used as tools for shaping stone tools. The Ikerbasque researcher Asier Gómez-Olivencia, who is currently working at the UPV/EHU-University of the Basque Country, has collaborated in this work published in the prestigious journal *Scientific Reports*.

The Neanderthals displayed great variability in their behaviour, including in their relationship with the dead. There is evidence on different sites (e.g. Chapelle-aux-Saints in France, and Sima de las Palomas on the Iberian Peninsula) that the Neanderthals buried the dead. Other sites show that the Neanderthals ate the meat and broke the bones of their fellow Neanderthals for food. Evidence of this cannibal behaviour has been discovered at various sites in France (e.g., Moula-Guercy, Les Pradelles) and on the Iberian Peninsula (Zafarraya, El Sidrón).

However, there are very few sites with Neanderthal remains north of latitude 50º, as only two of these sites have provided information on possible funerary treatment. Researchers have found partial skeletons in Feldhofer (Germany) and in Spy (Belgium), and these remains, together with the context in which they were found, allows researchers to deduce that they were interred. In fact, the excavation notes on the Spy II individual indicate that it was a complete skeleton found in a contracted position.

A new study, led by Dr Hélène Rougier, along with UPV/EHU researcher Asier Gómez-Olivencia, has discovered the largest number of Neanderthal human remains in northern Europe, not only in terms of the number of remains but also in terms of the number of individuals represented, a total of five: four adolescents or adults and one child. The site is the Troisième cavern in Goyet (Belgium).

A third of the Neanderthal remains at this site display cut marks, and many bear percussion marks caused when the bones were crushed to extract the marrow. The comparison of the Neanderthal remains with other remains of fauna recovered on the site (horses and reindeer) suggests that the three species were consumed in a similar way. This discovery expands the range of known Neanderthal behaviour in Northern Europe with respect to the dead.



The different categories of anthropogenic modifications found on Neanderthal bones at Goyet. Femur I (left) displays signs of having been used as a percussor for shaping stone, and femur III (right) bears cut marks indicating the processing …more

The first evidence of Neanderthal cannibalism in northern Europe is discovered

What is more, five human Neanderthal remains display signs of having been used as soft percussors to shape stone. The Neanderthals used boulders to shape stone tools and also used bone in some cases to sharpen the cutting edges (one example closer to home can be found in the bone retouchers, mainly belonging to deer, recovered on the Azlor site in Dima, Bizkaia). So far, there are three sites in which the Neanderthals are known to have used the bones of a fellow Neanderthal to shape stone tools: a femur fragment in the case of Krapina in Croatia and Les Pradelles, and a skull fragment at La Quina in France. Goyet has provided 5 sets of human remains used as retouchers, which almost doubles the record known so far on a single site.

It is also possible to date this collection of Neanderthal remains. The researchers determined that these Neanderthals lived between 40,500 and 45,500 years ago. The exceptional preservation of the collection has also enabled the mitochondrial DNA of these remains to be recovered. Compared with DNA from other Neanderthals, it reveals that genetically, the Neanderthals at Goyet resembled those of Feldhofer (Germany), Vindija (Croatia) and El Sidrón (Asturias, Spain). This great genetic uniformity, notwithstanding the geographical distances, indicates that the Neanderthal population that inhabited Europe was small.

Explore further: Neanderthals buried their dead, new research concludes

More information: Hélène Rougier et al. Neandertal cannibalism and Neandertal bones used as tools in Northern Europe, *Scientific Reports* (2016). DOI: 10.1038/srep29005

10 comments

Shootist

1 / 5 (2) Jul 08, 2016
Humans, er hominids have been munching on the skulls of other hominids since day two. It may be that some still do.

huckmucus

3.7 / 5 (3)Jul 08, 2016

> Humans, er hominids have been munching on the skulls of other hominids since day two. It may be that some still do.

True. I don't think anyone should extrapolate too much from this. You do what you gotta do during lean times. Homo sap sap included. Not sure of the dates, but maybe we were eating them; maybe

it was not N on N eating.

malapropism

4.3 / 5 (3)Jul 08, 2016
It would be interesting to know if the mDNA might indicate whether the cannibalised group were inter-related, and if they were not related to the group that ate them, but I suppose the likelihood of finding DNA of the cannibalising group is pretty minimal.

rrrander

1 / 5 (2)Jul 09, 2016
I love how the proggies will do anything to prove that no one outside of homosapien Europe ever cannibalized each other. Because to impune the "behaviour" of those from non-European countries or non-humans is somehow "racist." Talk about wide-reaching, P.C. historical revisionism.

torbjorn_b_g_larsson

5 / 5 (1)Jul 09, 2016
"Humans, er hominids have been munching on the skulls of other hominids".

There is no similar evidence for that within the hominin lineage. I think. On the contrary, the root species were mainly herbivores (or fruit eaters), as is the nearest kin (chimps, gorillas).

Which is why these finds are exceptional.

"historical revisionism".

Is all yours, since the anthropologists go where the data lead them. As can be seen from the material here, the cannibalizing groups were all near related with those who didn't. (And in any case, neanderthals would have been the closest in analogy to "a race" that Homo would have.)

Cannibalism for various reasons (food, rituals) are known from all over the world and is institutionalized in major religions (catholicism, say). You are confusing politics with science.

@malapropism: The article seems to claim the cannibalizing groups were all near related with those who didn't, from the mtDNA evidence..

huckmucus

5 / 5 (2) Jul 09, 2016

> . . . the cannibalizing groups were all near related with those who didn't. . . . the cannibalizing groups were all near related with those who didn't . . ..

Unwieldy writing, at least for me. You used the phrase twice and I tried to shoe-horn some meaning into it with your context, but I'm still left asking: Didn't what? Didn't cannibalize?

BiteMe

not rated yet10 hours ago

Mossbackers like rrrander never cease to astound me. It completely boggles my imagination how anyone could disparage a term like "progressive". As opposed to what? A regressive? Status quo? Yeah, mossbacker. "I've gotten mine, screw the fuck out of you". Hey, idiots. No one gets ahead until everyone gets ahead. That's why so often in history it has come down to squeaky bum time for those in power. It's kind of elementary. Don't fuck people over and they won't want to cut off your head.

Oh, but that's progress. "Can't have that!" Living in perpetual hope of a new Dark Ages. They're in with a shout, too. But...WHY?!?

Must be an inability to see a few moves ahead. Only thing I can figure. Well, looking at the quality of their reasoning, it could just be "butt dumb syndrome".

torbjorn_b_g_larsson

not rated yet9 hours ago

> > . . . the cannibalizing groups were all near related with those who didn't. . . . the cannibalizing groups were all near related with those who didn't . . ..
>
> Unwieldy writing, at least for me. You used the phrase twice and I tried to shoe-horn some meaning into it with your context, but I'm still left asking: Didn't what? Didn't cannibalize?

Yeah, I was hurried. Yes, the groups whether or not they cannibalized, were closely related according to the genetic evidence. "... great genetic uniformity ..."

Cirjan

not rated yet8 hours ago
What about the Tibetan Sky burial?!

huckmucus

not rated yet2 hours ago

> > . . . the cannibalizing groups were all near related with those who didn't. . . . the cannibalizing groups were all near related with those who didn't . . ..
>
> Unwieldy writing, at least for me. You used the phrase twice and I tried to shoe-horn some meaning into it with your context, but I'm still left asking: Didn't what? Didn't cannibalize?
>
> Yeah, I was hurried. Yes, the groups whether or not they cannibalized, were closely related according to the genetic evidence. "... great genetic uniformity ..."

Okay, thanks. I would say yes, they are closely related but I don't think there were cannibalizers and non-cannibalizers. I'd say all were *under the right conditions." Hard times . . .. Unless they have some evidence that this was par for the course, or the norm, even in good times.

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Journal reference: Scientific Reports Provided by: University of the Basque Country

Neanderthals buried their dead, new research concludes

phys.org

December 16, 2013



Neanderthals buried their dead, new research concludes

The bouffia Bonneval at La Chapelle-aux-Saints and its Neandertal burial pit. Credit: Cédric Beauval.

Neanderthals, forerunners to modern humans, buried their dead, an international team of archaeologists has concluded after a 13-year study of remains discovered in southwestern France.

Their findings, which appear in the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, confirm that burials took place in western Europe prior to the arrival of modern humans.

"This discovery not only confirms the existence of Neanderthal burials in Western Europe, but also reveals a relatively sophisticated cognitive capacity to produce them," explains William Rendu, the study's lead author and a researcher at the Center for International Research in the Humanities and Social Sciences (CIRHUS) in New York City.

CIRHUS is a collaborative arrangement between France's National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS) and New York University.

The findings center on Neanderthal remains first discovered in 1908 at La Chapelle-aux-Saints in southwestern France. The well-preserved bones led its early 20th-century excavators to posit that the site marked a burial ground created by a predecessor to early modern humans. However, their conclusions have sparked controversy in the scientific community ever since, with skeptics maintaining that the discovery had been misinterpreted and that the burial may not have been intentional.

Beginning in 1999, Rendu and his collaborators, including researchers from the PACEA laboratory of the University of Bordeaux and Archéosphère, a private research firm, began excavating seven other caves in the area.

In this excavation, which concluded in 2012, the scientists found more Neanderthal remains—two children and one adult—along with bones of bison and reindeer.

While they did not find tool marks or other evidence of digging where the initial skeleton was unearthed in 1908, geological analysis of the depression in which the remains were found suggests that it was not a natural feature of the cave floor.

As part of their analysis, the study's authors also re-examined the human remains found in 1908. In contrast to the reindeer and bison remains at the site, the Neanderthal remains contained few cracks, no weathering-related smoothing, and no signs of disturbance by animals.

"The relatively pristine nature of these 50,000-year-old remains implies that they were covered soon after death, strongly supporting our conclusion that Neanderthals in this part of Europe took steps to bury their dead," observes Rendu. "While we cannot know if this practice was part of a ritual or merely pragmatic, the discovery reduces the behavioral distance between them and us."

Explore further: Neanderthals died out earlier than originally believed

More information: Evidence supporting an intentional Neandertal burial at La Chapelle-aux-Saints, www.pnas.org/cgi/doi/10.1073/pnas.1316780110

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Journal reference: Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences Provided by: New York University

Neolithic to Anglo-Saxon activity at site in Leicestershire

PASTHORIZONS adventuresinarchaeology
Archaeology News from Past Horizons

Posted on July 21, 2016



Archaeologists recently excavated a Bronze Age barrow and Anglo-Saxon cemetery under former allotments at Rothley in Leicestershire. The project has offered a rare opportunity to investigate how different generations have re-used ancient sacred places, with Iron Age and Anglo-Saxon people possibly making connections with Bronze Age barrow builders in order to create their own sense of place in the landscape.



The site during excavation. Archaeologists stand around the line of the backfilled Bronze Age barrow ditch. The Cossington Barrows would have once been positioned in the middle background. Image: University of Leicester

A team of archaeologists, led by Dr Gavin Speed from University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) has spent the winter investigating the site and uncovering exciting new evidence for Rothley's ancient past dating back some 6,000 years. The project was funded by Persimmons Homes in advance of a new housing development off Loughborough Road, Rothley.

Neolithic period

The earliest activity dates to the Neolithic period (4000-2000 BC) – a stone axe found redeposited in the backfill of the barrow ditch and a near-complete Middle Neolithic 'Peterborough Ware' pottery vessel located in a pit close by. Important Neolithc settlement sites (excavated by ULAS in 2005 and 2010) are known nearby and these new glimpses of activity will add further to our understanding of the bigger picture of occupation in the region.

Bronze Age barrow

One of the main focuses of the excavation was a Bronze Age barrow measuring over 30 metres in diameter. The earth mound had not survived subsequent generations of ploughing but the surrounding near-circular ditch was still present with cremation burials close to the ditch edge. The monument broadly dates to 2000-700 BC and more precise dating will be possible following future detailed finds analysis and scientific dating.

The barrow is positioned close to the confluence of the Rivers Soar and Wreake, on high ground with a prominent outlook over the intersection of the Soar valley and the Rothley brook. To the east, a little over a mile away, around the village of Cossington, are other barrows forming part of a small



A Neolithic stone axe. Image: University of Leicester



A sherd of Neolithic 'Peterborough Ware' pottery. Image: University of Leicester

barrow cemetery excavated by ULAS between 1999 and 2001.

The Rothley barrow has been used repeatedly, creating a long history of activity in the vicinity which shows that it must have acted as an important landmark in the local area.

Dr Gavin Speed, Senior Supervisor at ULAS said: "*By the Iron Age the barrow had partly eroded and its ditches had silted up but much of the mound was likely still upstanding, making it a visible landmark in the local landscape even if its original purpose and meaning had changed.*"

Iron Age activity

During this period (700 BC – AD 43), a large rectangular enclosure ditch was dug partly along the alignment of the barrow ditch, avoiding the central area of the mound. Iron Age farmers appear to have utilised the area as enclosed fields with an entrance on the eastern side of the enclosure on top of the mound and a busy area of pits dug 'behind' the mound to the west. The Iron Age inhabitants may not have had any knowledge of the barrow's original use and meaning but their respect of the surviving earthwork may show that they understood that the area held some significance.

Anglo-Saxon cemetery

Much later, in the early Anglo-Saxon period (AD 410-700), the barrow became the focus for a small inhumation cemetery. This area of Leicestershire, the Soar valley and its tributaries, has a high density of Anglo-Saxon settlements and cemeteries and an Anglo-Saxon building has been found in an adjacent field in 2010 by ULAS (now under the aptly named Saxon Drive).

Re-use of round barrows during the Anglo-Saxon period is a fairly common occurrence in England. However, there are very few known instances in Leicestershire and the recent discovery at Rothley, with at least twelve burials, is only the second and largest confirmed example to be excavated. Within the barrow mound were six burials, a seventh burial was dug into the backfilled ditch, whilst a further five burials were found in the immediate surrounding area. Unfortunately, the acidic soils have destroyed virtually all evidence of the skeletons, apart from some teeth and tiny bone fragments, but accompanying some of the bodies were metal objects – spears, knives, a 'spike', an annular brooch and the boss and studs from a shield. A complete pottery vessel was also found in one grave. These had all been placed with the bodies at burial as grave goods.

The act of Anglo-Saxon people burying their dead close to Bronze Age barrows is seen in numerous examples throughout England. This could simply be due to convenience; however, recent studies have shown that it may be evidence of emergent elites displaying their power by connecting to ancestors of the past through monument re-use. They and their followers would understand the meaning, thus securing control of the landscape.

Community dig

This weekend (23-24 July), as part of the Festival of Archaeology, Rothley residents will be digging test pits around the village with the help of volunteers and University of Leicester archaeologists to find out more about the village's early history. For more information on this Charnwood Roots Community Dig please visit www.charnwoodroots.org.

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Dog walker stumbles across 'Nessie's remains'

05:58 EST, 30 June 2016

dailymail.co.uk

Daily Mail .com

MailOnline US - news, sport, celebrity, science and health stories

Could this be the what's left of Nessie? Dog walker stumbles across what looks like skeletal remains washed up on the shore of Loch Ness

- **What appeared to be remains of mysterious creature show up on shore**
- **They include detailed skeletal frame and skull as well as internal organs**
- **But they are believed to be an elaborate hoax being filmed for television**
- **The 'monster' has been 'spotted' more than 1,000 times in 1,500 years**

By Joseph Curtis For Mailonline

Nessie hunters have been left scratching their heads after a dog walker found what appears to be the remains of the legendary 'monster' washed up on a beach.

These grizzly remains were found on the shore of Loch Ness in Scotland, blocked off by police tape.

The scene appears to be a highly elaborate prank by someone who has managed to create a lifelike skeleton frame and organs of the legendary beast, complete with sharp-toothed skull.

Scroll down for video



These grizzly 'remains' of a giant sea creature were found on the shore of Loch Ness, prompting questions over whether Nessie was dead

The 'body' is highly detailed down to the skull, pictured, which features a range of sharp teeth, a long skeletal neck internal organs

Nessie has been 'spotted' more than 1,000 times in 1,500 years, including this famous image taken in 1934 that was eventually revealed to be a hoax

The images were posted on Facebook by animal charity Help2Rehome Scotland - who asked the public whether they believed the remains were the real deal.

Responses were split between the serious Nessie fans and those who saw it as a bit of fun.

Charley Slaven said: 'If it was nessie washed up I'm pretty sure the bones wouldn't b (sic) intact they would b (sic) broken up duh obviously either a prank or for a TV programme to to b (sic) placed like that.'



Catherine McGovern Mccracken added: 'Clearly some butcher needed more room in his bins lol (sic).'

But it appears the scene, pictured, is an elaborate hoax that is being filmed for television

There were also witty suggestions that Nessie's 'demise' was a result of the Brexit result of the EU referendum.

A Facebook user called Dutch Rider said: 'Maybe Nessie doesn`t want to leave the UK either and has just gave up (sic).'

The charity eventually revealed the heavily detailed remains were actually put together for a television show.

Sightings of the Loch Ness Monster were at their highest in more than a decade last year with five eye witnesses accounts of the mythical creature registered.

Gary Campbell, keeper of the Official Loch Ness Monster Sightings Register, said 2015 was a 'vintage' year for Nessie reports in Scotland.

It has now accepted five sightings for the year - the most in 13 years.

According to Google, there are around 200,000 searches each month for the Loch Ness Monster, and around 120,000 for information and accommodation close to Loch Ness. The monster mystery is said to be worth £30m to the region.

Mr Campbell believes that Nessie is most likely a fish or eel. The chartered accountant, based in Inverness, has been logging Nessie sightings for 19 years.

Among the most famous claimed sightings is a photograph taken in 1934 by Colonel Robert Kenneth Wilson

It was later exposed as a hoax by one of the participants, Chris Spurling, who, on his deathbed, revealed that the pictures were staged.

Other sightings James Gray's picture from 2001 when he and friend Peter Levings were out fishing on the Loch, while namesake Hugh Gray's blurred photo of what appears to be a large sea creature was published in the Daily Express in 1933.

The first reported sighting of the monster is said to have been made in 565AD by the Irish missionary St Columba when he came across a giant beast in the River Ness.

But no one has ever come up with a satisfactory explanation for the sightings - although last year 'Nessie expert' Steve Feltham, who has spent 24 years watching the Loch, said he thought it was actually a giant Wels Catfish, native to waters near the Baltic and Caspian seas in Europe.

The charity eventually confirmed the remains were actually part of filming for a television show

Locals also took to Facebook to confirm it was not really Nessie and that film crews had been seen in the area



The popular legend of the monster has spread throughout the world, including as far as DisneyWorld in Florida where a lego version, pictured, has been built in a lake



Comments (258)

burnfield, manchester, United Kingdom, about 10 hours ago

Obviously the person who made this has never seen a dead animal - ever

ukipscotland uk4ever, glasgow, United Kingdom, about 11 hours ago

this is the result of a butcher with to much time on his hands

The Old Man, London, United Kingdom, about 19 hours ago

I'm surprised Momentum/Xsara haven't submitted this as yet another fake "Brexit' scare story. I can see the headline now: "Nessie Kills Herself After Brexit Shock! - Didn't want to live anymore in such a cruel world".

Willie Care, Fundindelve, United Kingdom, about 19 hours ago

Don't kill Nessie off or it will be the end of the Scottish ecomony

DC68, London, United Kingdom, about 20 hours ago

Worst internet fake I have seen for years. The organs would be gone

Infamy12, Preston, United Kingdom, about 20 hours ago

Grief. It. Is. A. FAKE!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Mike, Preston, United Kingdom, about 20 hours ago

of course it is a fake - the flesh has decayed but the internal organs are still fresh.

Blakewater, Blackburn, United Kingdom, about 20 hours ago

We're told it's a television prop. The internal organs are plopped in any old how rather than being arranged as they would be in a real creature.

Adam246, Milton Keynes, United Kingdom, about 20 hours ago

I personally think 'Nessie' is a better player than Ronaldo because of the way he 'snakes' around and manages to 'un-loch' defences!

Mark0158410, York, United Kingdom, about 21 hours ago

Maybe it's a Sturgeon or a Salmond!!

Roadhound101, Benfleet, United Kingdom, about 22 hours ago

You Scots will do ANYTHING to stay in the EU!! lol ;)

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Network of homeless tunnels and caves discovered in Albany

nwcn.com

Maggie Vespa, KGW , NWCN11:14 AM. PDT August 04, 2016



A look at one of the caves dug into the ground along Simpson Park Trail in Albany, Oregon. (Photo: Albany Police Department)

ALBANY, Ore. -- Albany police are doing their best to figure out who exactly is behind a large network of tunnels and caves, dug into the ground along Simpson Park Trail.

In general, police believe the hollowed-out dwellings, some of which were dug under large trees, are the work of transients.

Police first discovered the caves in June.

Since then, they've found a few people sleeping inside them.

One, Gabe Vergara, reportedly admitted to having dug the caves but said he doesn't typically stay there.

In the past, he's been charged with illegal camping and third-degree criminal mischief for having made similar tunnels.

The city of Albany is reportedly planning to hire a contractor to repair the damage to the habitat.

Depending on how much that costs, police say Vergara could face more charges, including first-degree criminal mischief, a felony.

This story will be updated throughout the day.

FCC Online Public Inspection File • EEO Public File Report

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Little-Seen Beaked Whale Deemed a New Species

Jul 27, 2016 05:07 PM ET

seeker.com

DNA analysis puts an enigmatic cetacean in a place of its own.

DNA analysis of 178 beaked whale samples has turned up an entirely new species: a black variation in the northern Pacific that is a rare sight even for frequent seafarers.

The samples, which included museum specimens as well as the remains of a whale found on an island in the Bering Sea, were examined by an international team of researchers that has reported its findings in the journal Marine Mammal Science.

The new whale is colored black and tops out at about 25 feet long, fully grown. It looks a lot like the more common Baird's beaked whale, save for its smaller size and darker color.

The elusive cetacean has been out there on the water all along. But sightings of it are rare, and no one had studied it closely enough to see that it was a new species.

"Japanese whalers have known about the black form but didn't consider it a separate species," said Erich Hoyt, study co-author and research fellow with Whale and Dolphin Conservation, in a statement.

All told, eight examples of the new species were found among the nearly 200 samples studied by the team.

"The challenge in documenting the species was simply locating enough specimens to provide convincing evidence," said lead author Phillip Morin, a biologist at the NOAA's Southwest Fisheries Science Center.

"Clearly this species is very rare and reminds us how much we have to learn about the ocean and even some of its largest inhabitants," Morin added.

Beaked whales, with their namesake dolphin-like "noses," in general are not as well known as some other whales. They're deep divers, heading thousands of feet down to patrol undersea canyons in search of squid and unlucky, bottom-dwelling fish that might be in the neighborhood. Bigger ones can reach some 36 feet long.

In their study, the scientists noted that Japanese whalers saw the new black and the existing, more slate-gray, Baird's beaked whales as two forms of Baird's. Now the new, little-seen species points up the need for caution going forward, they say.

"The implication of a new species of beaked whale is that we need to reconsider management of both species to be sure they're sufficiently protected, considering how rare the new one appears to be," said Hoyt.

"Discovering a new species of whale in 2016 is exciting but it also reveals how little we know and how much more work we have to do to truly understand these species," Hoyt added.

One such unknown involves the new whale's range. Samples found by the team suggest a relatively small area of operation in the northern Pacific between Japan and Alaska – the Baird's beaked

whale's range is bigger, covering the northern Pacific from Japan to Baja, Calif. – but some samples had telltale tropical shark bites, suggesting the black whales may also migrate to more tropical seas.



Creative Commons/Jason L. Buberal

Whether you're clicking until it hurts looking for Black Friday deals online or elbowing your way past your fellow humans in a brick-and-mortar to grab the last box of the hottest new ... something! ... on the shelves, eventually you're going to tire of all of that expending of energy, and cash. So why not ease your mind, check out some all-black creatures, and remember that nature still exists on this day of rampant consumerism? All-blackness occurs in lots of creatures, often as a rarity. Above we see an all-black caiman sneaking its way toward prey, or toward the electronics aisle for the latest new game.



DENNIS BEEK/AFP/Getty Images

Melanistic, or all-black, grey seals are extremely rare. This one was found on the Wadden Islands, off the Netherlands, in 2009. As big as it looks, it was only a few weeks old.

Black squirrels aren't exactly rare. The subset of the Eastern grey squirrel can be seen on the U.S. East Coast and some Central and Midwestern states.

Wolves can even sport the occasional coat of black.



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This incredibly rare melanistic King penguin was photographed on a beach in Fortuna Bay, South Georgia, in British Overseas Territory.

Guinea pigs, too, can occur in fashionable black.

This black pine snake needs no help shopping for its meals.

A black variation on the common lizard wonders what all the fuss is about on Black Friday.

Melanistic leopards also fall under the heading of black panthers.

Melanistic jaguars are also black panthers. The "jag" is bigger and a bit sturdier than the leopard,



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though they look a lot alike in general.

Black crows are always up for a good haunting of a landscape.

Of course, how could we leave without saying hello to a black Labrador puppy? Is it just us, or does he look especially happy? Must be the expectation of leftover turkey in his future!

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New Mexico Town Still Celebrates Legendary UFO Crash Tale, 69 Years On

huffingtonpost.com

This weekend's Roswell festival marks the anniversary, more or less, of an enduring mystery.

07/01/2016 08:33 pm ET

- Lee Speigel Writer, Editor, The Huffington Post


Roswell Daily Record

Roswell Daily Record

Roswell Daily Record

RAAF Captures Flying Saucer On Ranch in Roswell Region

Claims Army Is Stacking Courts Martial

House Passes Tax Slash by Large Margin

Security Council Paves Way to Talks On Arms Reductions

No Details of Flying Disk Are Revealed

Miners and Operators Sign Highest Wage Pact in History

In early July 1947 — the exact date is unknown — something fell out of the sky, hitting the ground on a ranch 70 miles from Roswell, New Mexico.

Was it an extraterrestrial craft? A weather balloon? A top-secret, high-altitude military device used to detect Soviet atomic tests?

Nearly 70 years later, those questions persist, with decades of speculation and conjecture fueling the now-legendary case of what's commonly called the Roswell UFO crash.

Roswell marks the event each year on the first weekend in July, attracting a variety of speakers and presentations that aim to shed light on what really happened all those years ago.

Speakers at this year's two-day Roswell Incident include this reporter, a longtime writer on the UFO beat, with a presentation called, "Close Encounters of the Military Kind."

The 125-year-old Roswell Daily Record launched the UFO crash legend on July 8, 1947, when it published a startling headline announcing a "flying saucer" had been captured, as seen above. The next day, the paper printed a contradictory article, quoting the military as claiming the crashed object was merely a weather balloon.



"We have a lot of tie-in with this whole Roswell incident and we wanted to help make it a more serious exploration of the UFO event as kind of a springboard for that topic," said the newspaper's publisher, Barbara Beck, whose family has owned the Roswell Daily Record since 1935.

"There's only so much you can talk about the Roswell incident, because most of the people who were associated with it are

dead and we really don't know what happened," Beck told The Huffington Post.

Here's how it unfolded in 1947, as told to this reporter four decades ago, by military participants in the original events:

"Col. [William] Blanchard called me and said, 'We've found something northwest of Roswell. We don't know what it is, but you ought to put out a release on it so that we don't get caught with our pants down,'" said Lt. Walter Haut, who was public information officer of the 509th Bomb Group based at Roswell Army Air Field. (It was the 509th that delivered the atomic bombs on Japan, ending World War II.)

Haut said he was never an overly inquisitive person, and didn't talk much about any of this to anyone.

"I do not ask a bunch of questions, unless I need the information for a specific thing," Haut said. "I'm not going to go beyond the scope of what I'm working on. I think that the public would appreciate knowing if it's a true fact, that there are intelligent beings outside of our own Earth, and I don't think it would create any panic."

This brings us to Maj. Jesse Marcel, who at the time was in charge of intelligence and security for the base. He was assigned the initial task of going out to the debris field to collect some of the wreckage — it was scattered over an area about three-quarters of a mile long, and several hundred feet wide.

"We went out to the scene of where the crash was and started picking up the debris," Marcel recalled. "It's almost indescribable. It's not the kind of material I'd ever seen in my life, nor have I seen it since.

"There were little pieces that looked like they were made of wood, but it wasn't wood, and it had some kind of writing or hieroglyphics that I couldn't decipher and nobody else could. It was flexible, but you couldn't break it and you couldn't burn it.

"Also, I found a piece of metal, which was about the thickness of the foil in a pack of cigarettes. But the amazing part about it was you could put it on the ground, hit it with a sledge hammer and you couldn't even put a dent in it! That astounded me, and I knew it was nothing from here. I was convinced it was not from anywhere on Earth, and I'm still convinced of that."

The video below shows Marcel 30 years after the 1947 events of Roswell, sticking to his story.

Marcel told HuffPost that, after gathering the wreckage, he was told by Gen. Roger Ramey at Carswell Air Force Base in Forth Worth, Texas, "'Don't open your mouth to the press. Put some stuff on the floor and let them take a picture of it.' But I was careful not to put out anything with detail on it. So, they took pictures, and one picture appeared in the papers."

Here is that photo:

"Gen. Ramey told news reporters this was nothing but a crashed weather balloon, but I do know this: Later on, I went back to Roswell to resume my duties, but what they did at Carswell was to make a mock display with a battered weather balloon, and they let the press take pictures of that. The whole thing was a cover-up to begin with, and that was the last I heard of it."



There are many more aspects to the original Roswell UFO story, including eyewitnesses to related events. All are overshadowed by the military claim that the crash had nothing to do with an alien ship.

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New tests find no THC in Colo. town's drinking water

USA Today Network Raquel Villanueva, KUSA-TV, Denver

usatoday.com

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New tests find no THC in Colo. town's drinking water

Volunteers hand out cases of bottled water to residents in Hugo, Colo.(Photo: Courtesy of Corky Scholl)



636048288623210031-Hugo-1469229665161-4279156-ver1.0.png

HUGO, Colo. — Investigators in Colorado said Saturday that a small town's tap water has tested negative for THC, the psychoactive ingredient in marijuana.

Colorado Bureau of Investigation scientists said they believe initial positive tests this week in Hugo, about 100 miles southeast of Denver, were false.

"There never was THC in our water supply," Lincoln County sheriff's Cpt. Michael Yowell. "We did get multiple tests showing the possibility of THC, but independent tests taken by different people at different times and places showed no evidence of THC."

The town of Hugo's approximately 720 residents had been warned not to drink or cook using the local water supply after authorities found evidence of THC. Those warnings have now been lifted.



Colorado town awaits tests for THC in drinking water

"We are happy to report that the water advisory is canceled immediately. Please resume any and all water activities," the sheriff's office notified residents on its Facebook page.

Yowell said investigators have found evidence that one of the town's five wells may have been tampered with. A criminal investigation will continue.

He said a shed covering a well head was broken into, but there was no indication who was responsible or when it occurred. Yowell said the shed is only protected by a padlock, like many other wells on Colorado's eastern plains, but someone gained entry by breaking into a side of the shed.

Bottled water was distributed to residents after officials said Thursday that some field tests showed evidence of the chemical, and more tests were ordered. No illnesses were reported in Hugo.

Commercial marijuana cultivation, product manufacturing, testing facilities and retail marijuana stores are banned in Hugo, although they are legal elsewhere in the state.

Contributing: The Associated Press

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Noah's Ark Crashes Into Coast Guard Vessel... You Read That Right - gCaptain

gcaptain.com

gCaptain

Maritime News

June 10, 2016 by Mike Schuler



A full-size replica of the Ark of Noah is seen after it crashed into a moored coast guard vessel in Oslo harbour, Norway June 10, 2016. NTB Scanpix/Gorm Kallestad

A 230-foot long replica of Noah's Ark collided with a Norwegian Coast Guard vessel as it arrived in Oslo, Norway on Friday, causing damage to both ships.

Media says the wooden replica, built by a Dutch carpenter Johan Huibers after he dreamed of a flood in his home town, was being towed into Oslo harbor when it somehow lost control and crashed into the moored patrol vessel *Nornen*.

Watching the video its hard to tell exactly what happened, but photos posted by Norwegian media show a big hole in the side of the Ark's wooden hull.



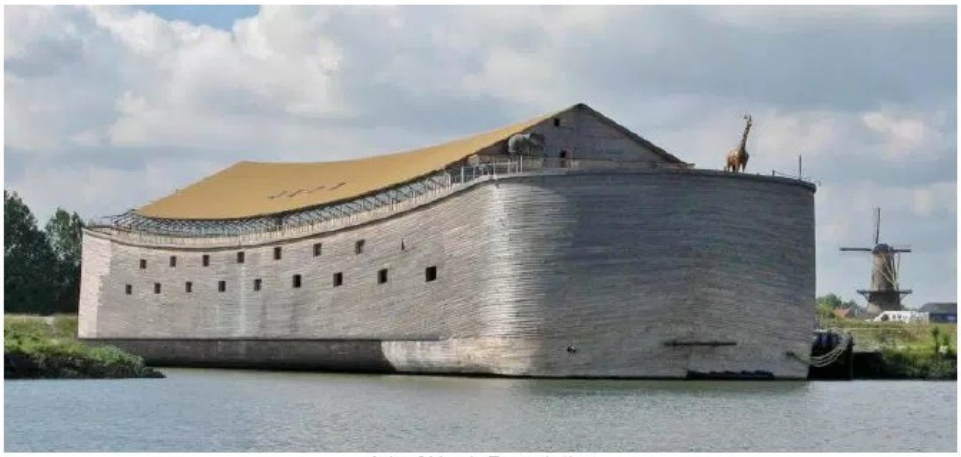
A crew member inspects damages on the hull of a full-size replica of the Ark of Noah after it crashed into a moored coast guard vessel in Oslo harbour, Norway June 10, 2016. NTB Scanpix/Hkon Mosvold Larsen

The Ark is now owned by the Ark of Noah Foundation, which was planning on bringing the educational vessel across the Atlantic to Rio de Janeiro for the Olympic Games this summer.

Media reports said there were no animals on board when the collision occurred.

Filed Under: Maritime News, News Tagged With: collision, noah's ark, norway, Video

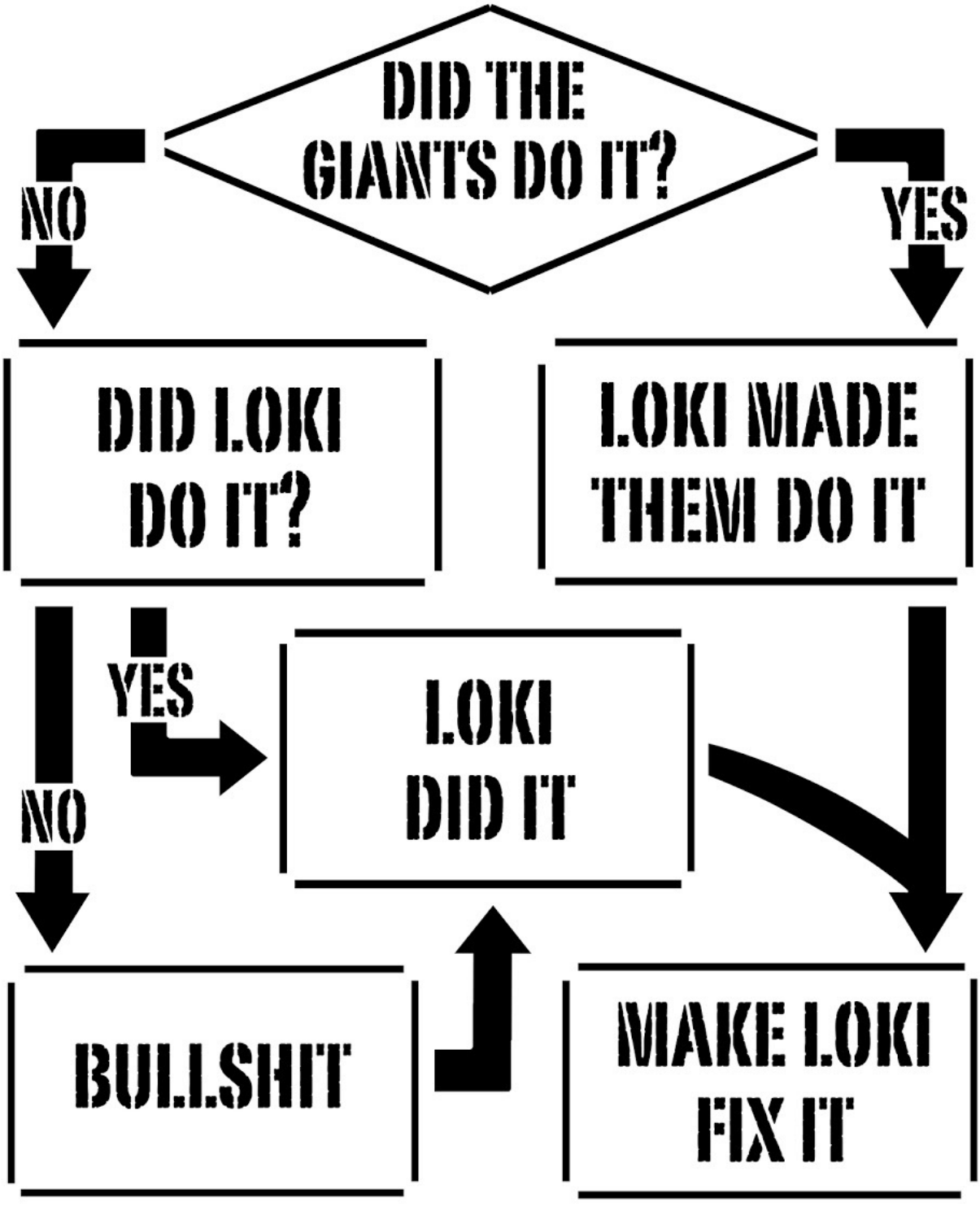
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Ark of Noah Foundation

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NORSE CRISIS FLOWCHART



Norway mulls giving mountain peak to Finland

July 28, 2016

yahoo.com



FILE In this Aug. 42008 file photo, a general view of the Halti mountain, on the Finnish and Norwegian borders, in Enontekio, Finland. Norwegian Prime Minister Erna Solberg is considering moving a mountain _ or at least the peak of it _ as a gift to Finland when the Nordic country next year celebrates 100 years of independence from Russia. (Mikko Stig/Lehtikuva, via AP, File)

HELSINKI (AP) — Norway is considering moving a mountain — or at least its peak — to neighboring Finland.

Anne Nordskog, a spokeswoman for Norwegian Prime Minister Erna Solberg, said Wednesday the government is contemplating a proposal to give the Halti peak as a gift to Finland next year as the Finns celebrate 100 years of independence.

Most of the mountain is on the Finnish side of their northern border but the peak of 1,331 meters (4,367 feet) is in Norway. The proposal would redraw the border to put the peak in Finland.

While mountainous Norway has several peaks that are higher, Finland's highest mountain is 1,325 meters.

Former Norwegian state surveyor Bjorn Geirr Harsson, who came up with the proposal, said "it would be nice to give Finland an extra 6 meters (20 feet)."

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The Notorious Reno Gang of Indiana

Reno Gang & the 1st Big Train Robbery

During the years after the Civil War, much of the nation suffered a period of unemployment and lawlessness, spawning a number of notorious desperadoes and outlaw gangs. It was during this time that the Reno Gang from Indiana began to terrorize the Midwest.



Frank and John Reno

One of the first outlaw brotherhoods in the United States, the Reno Gang was primarily made up of four brothers -- Frank, John, Simeon and William Reno who all came from the small rural community of Rockford two miles north of Seymour, Indiana.

The Reno family, comprised of five sons and one daughter, was headed up by J. Wilkison and Julia Ann Reno who owned a 1,200 acre farm. Frank was the first son born in 1837, followed by John in 1838, Simeon ("Sim") in 1843, Clinton in 1847, William in 1848, and Laura, in 1851.

Strictly religious, the children were required to study the bible for hours on Sundays, attend school, and work on the farm. Perhaps resenting their stringent religious upbringing, all but Clinton, who was called "Honest Clint," rebelled and found trouble at an early age. Even the daughter, Laura, was known to have been as wild as her four brothers who would later form the Reno Gang.

The older boys began to play crooked card games along the farm road when they were still very young, bilking travelers as they passed by. The trouble increased with a number of small burglaries and a rash of horse thefts. But by 1851, the bunch had become out-right criminals when several retailers' businesses were set ablaze and the Reno's were suspected of arson.

When the Civil War began, Frank and John became "bounty jumpers." At this time, federal recruiting officers paid a cash bounty to any man who signed up for military service, so the Reno's joined, pocketed the cash and deserted. Later, they would turn up in another area and go through the whole process again. When the draft began, they would make money from prosperous draftees who wanted to avoid the war. After taking the money from the man to be drafted, they would then appear as demanded, only to desert days later.

In 1864, the pair returned to Rockford, followed by a number of other "bounty jumpers" and lawless types the pair had met during their travels. Forming a gang, Frank, John, Sim, and William, along with the other miscreants, headquartered in the burned out buildings of Rockford.

Late in 1864, Frank, along with two other gang members by the names of Grant Wilson and Dixon robbed the post office and Gilbert's Store in nearby Jonesville, Indiana. Before long, they were captured by U.S. Marshals, but were able to post bond and released with a trial date pending.

The next year, two more post offices were robbed in Dudleytown and Seymour, as well as several retail burglaries.

In the meantime, Grant Wilson, who had been involved in the Jonesville robbery turned state's evidence, agreeing to testify against Frank Reno. However, before the trial was scheduled, Wilson was murdered and without his testimony, Frank was acquitted.

Next, the Reno Gang made their headquarters in a Seymour Hotel called the Radar House, where unfortunate travelers who stayed there often left penniless. From here, they also orchestrated a number of robberies across the Midwest, as well as operating a counterfeit ring.

Various members of the gang were arrested a number of times, but they were always released. The brothers bragged that they had "political clout," but the real story was that they were bribing or terrorizing officials into silence.



Seymore, Indiana historic postcard

By July 27, 1865, things had become so bad in the Seymour area that the *Seymour Times* issued a warning stating: "be wary of thieves and assassins that infest the place." A week later, on August 3, the paper ran an editorial which condemned the lawlessness and called for vigilantes to restore order, stating: "Nothing but Lynch law will save the reputation of this place and its citizens."

Despite the feelings of area citizens, the crime spree continued. In early 1866, a Radar House guest's beheaded body was found floating in the White River and the Courtland post office was robbed on January 11th. More murders occurred in February and July, 1866 and the ruthless gang of cut-throats continued to rob travelers who passed through Jackson County as well as branching out to neighboring communities, where they raided numerous merchants and county treasuries.

By this time, they were so well organized that no law official dared to arrest them and witnesses kept silent, in fear of their lives.

On September 28, 1867 a "copycat" holdup occurred at Seymour when another train was robbed. Authorities at first immediately suspected the Reno brothers, but later it was found that the train was robbed by Walker Hammond and Michael Colleran. Pulled off in the same manner as the Reno hold-up the previous year, the pair heisted about $8,000. Though Hammond and Colleran were "associates" of the Renos, John Reno tracked them down, beat them up, and turned them in, without the money, of course.

The next major hold-up of the gang was when John Reno traveled to Missouri, along with gang member, Val Elliott. There they robbed the Daviess County Courthouse in Gallatin on November 17, 1867, making off with more than $23,000 in cash and bonds. John, who had been recognized, was soon hotly pursued by the Pinkertons, who finally caught up with him in Seymour on December 4, 1867 and returned to Missouri for trial. As a lynch mob formed outside the courthouse, John Reno pled guilty on January 18, 1868 and was sentenced to 25 years hard labor at the Missouri State Penitentiary in Jefferson City.

In the meantime, Frank stayed back in Indiana, where a number of Indiana treasuries were burglarized. Though, he was arrested for the Clinton County robbery, he was found not guilty. Obviously, brother John's doing hard time was no deterrent to the rest of the gang.

On February 18, 1868, the gang robbed the Harrison County treasury in Magnolia, Iowa, netting some $14,000. The very next week, the gang robbed the Louisa and Mills County, Iowa treasuries for about $18,000, soon followed by another robbery of the Howard County treasury in late March.

Hiding out at the home of Michael Rogers in Council Bluffs, gang members Frank Reno, Albert Perkins and Miles Ogle were tracked down by the Pinkertons. William Pinkerton led a raid on the house where they arrested the trio and recovered about $14,000. However, not long after the bandits had been jailed, they were able to break a hole in the cell wall and escaped on April 1, 1868, leaving a note on the wall stating: "April Fools."

Heading back to their "home base" in Seymour, Frank and the gang planned their next big heist. On May 22, 1868, they struck another train in Marshfield, Indiana, some 17 miles south of Seymour. After forcing their way into the Express car, they threw the messenger from the train and robbed it of some $96,000 in cash and government bonds. After the loot was divided, the gang went into hiding with Frank Reno, Charlie Anderson, Albert Perkins, Michael Rogers and Miles Ogle heading for Windsor, Canada, just across the border from Detroit. Sim and William Reno hid out in Indianapolis, where they liked to gamble. Frank Sparks, Volney Elliott, John Moore, Charles Roseberry, Henry Jerrell, and Theodore Clifton returned to Jackson County, Indiana, where they immediately began to plan yet another train robbery. But, the Pinkertons were quickly on the trail of every member of the gang.

On July 9, 1868, the six members of the Reno Gang, who had returned to Jackson County -- Sparks, Elliott, Moore, Roseberry, Jerrell, and Clifton, attempted to rob an O & M train at the Shields watering station near Brownstown, west of Seymour. However, when the outlaws attempted to enter the express car they were met with a volley of gunfire. The ten Pinkerton detectives hidden in the express car wounded Henry Jerrell, Volney

Elliott and John Moore. However, all the gang members, with the exception of Elliott were able to escape. Soon though, Theodore Clifton and Charles Roseberry were arrested near Rockford, and all three prisoners were taken to the Seymour jail. On the night of July 20, 1868, the prisoners were to be moved by train; however, three miles west of Seymour, the train was stopped by a group of hooded men who called themselves the Jackson County Vigilance Committee. Forcing the officials to give up the prisoners, the vigilantes lynched Elliott, Clifton and Roseberry from a nearby tree.

The other three bandits who had gotten away were soon tracked to Coles County, Illinois, where they were hiding at the farm of a friend. The day after the trio were lynched by the vigilante committee, Henry Jerrell, Frank Sparks, and John Moore were captured and brought to Seymour by train. However, while the lawmen were escorting the prisoners to the Brownstown jail in a wagon on July 25th, they were again stopped by the vigilantes who lynched them from the same tree as three previously hanged.

The same month, lawmen were beginning to catch up with the Reno brothers who had so far eluded the law. William and Simeon were soon captured by Pinkertons in Indianapolis and taken to the Scott County Jail in Lexington. Upon their arrest, the vigilantes announced that they would raid the jailhouse and hang these two as well. Laura Reno soon offered to pay all expenses if the county would transfer her brothers to the sturdier New Albany jail, an offer that was quickly accepted. Secretly moved in the middle of the night, the outlaw pair were turned over to Sheriff Thomas Fullenlove of Floyd County on July 29th.

In the meantime, the Pinkertons had tracked Frank Reno and Charlie Anderson in Canada and worked diligently to get them extradited. However, the gang had different plans, concocting a scheme to murder Allan Pinkerton, but the crafty detective was able to thwart two different attempts on his life. The outlaws then resorted to bribery, but this too failed. Finally, after several delays and political maneuverings, Pinkerton was finally given custody of the prisoners on October 6, 1868.

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Odor forces evacuation of Gilbert court, sends 4 to hospital

Claire M Roney , The Republic | azcentral.com

azcentral.com



Evacuation at Gilbert Municipal Court

Four people were taken to hospitals after an odor forced the evacuation of Gilbert Municipal Court on July 20, 2016. Fire officials determined the odor resulted from a burned-out component in a water fountain.(Photo: Gilbert Fire and Medical Department)

Four people were sent to hospitals after an unknown odor forced the evacuation of Gilbert Municipal Court on Wednesday afternoon, according to Gilbert Fire and Rescue officials.

A total of six people reported suffering from nausea and headaches, but two refused treatment, said Gary Hildebrandt, a Gilbert fire spokesman.

Hazardous-material crews determined the odor was from a burned-out condenser in a drinking fountain. The condenser is a component that cools the water.

Gilbert Municipal Court, near Gilbert and Warner roads, was evacuated around 3:30 p.m. but had been cleared by hazmat crews and reopened by 4 p.m.

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Here's why Olympic athletes keep wearing that weird body tape sciencealert.com

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REUTERS/Marcelo del Pozo
Here's why Olympic athletes keep wearing that weird body tape
KEVIN LORIA, TECH INSIDER

As the 2016 Summer Olympics get started, there's lots to look forward to, including incredible feats of athleticism and stories about how well the city of Rio is or isn't dealing with the influx of athletes and fans.

But if 2008 or 2012 offer any guide, we'll also see athletes' bodies covered in stripes of colourful tape - specifically, something called kinesiology tape or (more commonly) kinesio tape. So what is it, and why is it there?

There are several different versions of this bright adhesive. In 2008 and 2012, athletes were frequently wearing Kinesio Tex Tape, which was developed by a Japanese chiropractor in 1979. Currently, KT Tape is the "official kinesiology tape licensee" for Team USA.

Kinesio's website says their tape "alleviates discomfort and facilitates lymphatic drainage by microscopically lifting the skin". They say that it can be "applied over muscles to reduce pain and inflammation, relax overused or tired muscles, and support muscles in movement on a 24-hour-a-day basis".

According to KT Tape's site, their tape is applied " to provide a lightweight, external support that helps you remain active while recovering from injuries. KT Tape creates neuromuscular feedback (called proprioception) that inhibits (relaxes) or facilitates stronger firing of muscles and tendons".

Both sites also give long lists of conditions the tape may help, ranging from headaches to sore muscles to shin splints, though there's limited research to back up those long lists.

Does it work?

Plenty of athletes might occasionally rely on athletic tape for support or to limit certain movement, but is there something special about this kinesio taping? It's kind of hard to say. Most research hasn't found significant benefits to using the tape.

Several reviews of studies that analysed the clinical use of kinesio taping for people with musculoskeletal conditions found no evidence it helped patients. So for people with chronic conditions that need treatment (not usually Olympic athletes), the tape probably doesn't do much.

Yet one recent review in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine* did find that "Kinesio taping is superior to minimal intervention for pain relief".

Other studies have found that the taping may potentially increase range of motion slightly, but there's not necessarily evidence that one type of tape is better than another.

So, it seems that there could potentially be some small effect for pain or range of motion from Kinesio Tex Tape or KT Tape, but that effect is not a particularly large one.

And yet, tonnes of athletes seem to love the stuff. In addition to Olympians, athletes like Lance Armstrong and David Beckham used the adhesive during their careers.

Surprisingly, that choice may be more logical than it seems, even if there's no actual physical benefit to taping.

If it turns out there really is some slight pain relieving or range of motion increasing effect, it's easy to see why that would matter to an Olympic athlete. Competitions are won or lost by fractions of a second, and even a .05 percent performance gain could be the difference between standing on the podium or sitting off to the side.

But even if there's no performance boost whatsoever from the tape, it could still be worth wearing if an athlete *thinks* it helps them. Study after study has documented the benefits of the placebo effect. People who think they've been given caffeine or morphine feel less fatigue or pain, even if all they've ingested is a sugar pill.

And as human and applied physiology professor Steve Harridge told Reuters in 2012, "The fact that athletes think it's going to do them some good can help in a psychological way."

And a psychological edge and the confidence that comes with it may be all someone needs to hurl a javelin further than their opponent or to spike that volleyball one final time.

This article was originally published by Tech Insider.

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Orlando man accused of attacking Pinky the flamingo at Busch Gardens

TAMPA --

mynews13.com



Pinky the Dancing Flamingo

Pinky the Dancing Flamingo dances the 'Flamingo Flamenco' in this screen grab from undated video from Busch Gardens Tampa Bay. The flamingo was attacked by a park guest Tuesday, Aug. 2, 2016 and had to be euthanized. (Busch Gardens Tampa Bay)

Last Updated: Wednesday, August 03, 2016, 4:07 PM

A family's trip to Busch Gardens Tampa Bay has resulted in the father going to jail after he allegedly attacked Pinky the Dancing Flamingo, according to Tampa officials.

- **Due to severe injuries, Pinky the flamingo had to be put down**
- **Police say Joseph Anthony Corrao threw Pinky to the ground**
- **Orlando man charged with aggravated cruelty to animals**

Because of the flamingo's injuries, it had to be put down, the park said.

At about 6:44 p.m. Tuesday, Joseph Anthony Corrao, 45, was with his mother, brother and three teenage children at Busch Gardens' Jambo Junction animal viewing area when, for some reason, he allegedly reached into an animal pen and picked up a flamingo, Tampa public safety information coordinator Stephen Hegarty said in a statement.

He set down that flamingo uninjured, police said, but then picked up a second flamingo. Other park-goers and Corrao's mother told him to leave the flamingos alone, police said.

Witnesses told police that Corrao then threw the second bird — later identified as Pinky the Dancing Flamingo — to the ground, which nearly led to the severing of the bird's foot. Hegarty said that because of the "excessive force" of the attack, the flamingo had to be euthanized.

Joseph Anthony Corrao faces charges of aggravated cruelty to animals, a felony, after police say he attacked Pinky the Dancing Flamingo at Busch Gardens Tampa Bay. (Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office)

"Pinky was immediately transported to the park's Animal Care Center where veterinarians made the decision to humanely euthanize her based on the severity of her injuries," said Karen Varga-Sinka, publicity and communications senior manager for Busch Gardens Tampa Bay. "Pinky was a beloved member of the Busch Gardens Tampa Bay family and made many appearances on behalf of the park's conservation and education efforts. She will be sorely missed."

The man accused of attacking Pinky was detained by park security and arrested by Tampa Police.



Corrao was charged with aggravated cruelty to animals, a felony, and bonded out of jail Wednesday morning.

Below is a video of Pinky and how many will remember the dancing flamingo best.

Bright House Networks | ©2016 News 13. All rights reserved.

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Oscar Wilde and Bram Stoker Were Involved in a Literary Love Triangle

historybuff.com

They lived a scenario out of an R. Kelly music video

Jul 13, 2016





Other than the fact they lived at the same time and were Irish, Abraham "Bram" Stoker, author of *Dracula,* and famed playwright Oscar Wilde didn't have a ton in common...at first. That is, except for the fact that, together, they lived out the scenario of an R. Kelly music video. In fact, they both dated the same girl.

This love triangle started in Dublin in 1875, when both young men fell head-over-heels for a woman named Florence Balcombe. Bram spent that holiday season with the Wilde clan, whose numbers included Oscar. Though the two men weren't super-close, they'd known one another for quite some time. Around that time, Oscar met Flo and they started dating; he described her as "just seventeen with the most perfectly beautiful face I ever saw and not a sixpence of money."



Oscar Wilde's sketch of Florence Balcombe. Image via the Women's Museum of Ireland.

Named for Florence Nightingale, Miss Balcombe was quite the lovely heart-breaker. The following year, O.W. visited her, painted portraits for her, and composed verse, but, by 1877, things had petered out. Why? Perhaps because Wilde wasn't in a financial place to bring home a bride. Although later famously arrested for homosexuality after losing a big libel case, Wilde did also marry and father children.

By 1878, "Florrie," as Oscar called his ex, was already engaged again...to her former lover's old friend, Bram Stoker, then a manager at a Dublin theater. They wed on December 4 of that year; she was nineteen, he thirty-one. Reports have it that Oscar wasn't happy; he asked Florence to return to him a gold cross he'd given her and had inscribed with his name, which he said was a reminder of their two sweet years together. She, in turn, requested the return of many letters she'd sent him over the years. Tensions between the Stokers and Wilde, both big presences on the Dublin literary scene, seemed to have eased after 1884, when Wilde himself wed.

Interestingly, modern literary scholars have used this love triangle as a lens through which to interpret Stoker's *Dracula*. Meanwhile, Florence herself became best known for her battle against the creators of the film *Nosferatu* for stealing the plot of *Dracula*.

Feature images via Wikimedia Commons Public Domain.

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Pakistani lawmaker seeks to protect nation's youth: from Doraemon cartoons

August 3, 2016 yahoo.com

LAHORE, Pakistan (Reuters) - A Pakistani opposition lawmaker on Wednesday proposed banning 24-hour cartoon TV channels, specifically the popular Japanese series "Doraemon", drawing ridicule on social media in a country fighting corruption, poverty and Islamist militants.

Malik Taimur ,from cricketer-turned-politician Imran Khan's political party, said such channels could have a negative influence on children.

Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) holds a majority in the northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, which is on the frontline of the fight against the Taliban and other militants that kill hundreds each year.

The resolution submitted in Punjab province's assembly requested "the federal government that it make it binding upon PEMRA (state regulator) that it close down cartoon channels, specifically Doraemon, or only run them for limited time periods".

"Children's education and physical health is being affected by these 24-hour cartoon channels," the resolution said.

Doraemon is a small, blue robot cat from the future sent back in time to help a hapless schoolboy and his family.

Many episodes of the animated version feature lessons about moral values, and the series has been translated into over 30 languages. Japan even selected Doraemon as a cartoon cultural ambassador in 2008.

After Khan's party member filed the petition, #PTIvsDoraemon began trending on Twitter in Pakistan, with many people wondering why the party didn't focus on more pressing issues such as child abuse, corruption and poverty.

"In a country where child abductions and abuse is rampant, PTI decides to raise its voice for the real threat our children face. Doraemon," said Twitter user Assad Zulfiqar Khan.

Another Twitter user Adeel Hussain said: "When you finally wipe clean poverty, hunger and corruption. So you have nothing better to do. #PTIvsDoraemon."

(Reporting by Mubasher Bukhari; Writing by Mehreen Zahra-Malik; Editing by Hugh Lawson)

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Daredevil pastor to test faith with fire

Georgie Silvarole , @gsilvarole

democratandchronicle.com

Democrat & Chronicle
PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

Rochester Democrat and Chronicle



mercury.JPG

John "Mercury" Morgan, 51, is the senior pastor at Faith on Fire Fellowship, who also happens to have a passion for daredevil stunts.(Photo: Provided, John Morgan)

John "Mercury" Morgan isn't your typical pastor. Sure, he performs baptisms, conducts weddings and delivers a sermon every Sunday.

But he also happens to like to ride his bicycle through fire.

"When I wanted to become a professional daredevil, I was maybe 12. And I knew that if you were going to be a professional daredevil, you had to have a cool-sounding name," Morgan said. "I couldn't just be John Morgan."

Morgan, 51, is the senior pastor at Faith on Fire Fellowship. The church, formerly known as Faith to Faith Fellowship, is celebrating its rebranding on Saturday with a daylong festival at its location at 319 Browncroft Blvd. The event is free and open to the public, and boasts live music, bounce houses, barbecue eats and most excitingly, some serious fire.

Morgan's no amateur when it comes to stunts like this. In his youth, the Rochester native idolized Evel Knievel and used to jump his bike over trash cans in his driveway. At 15, Morgan met a bodyguard of Evel Knievel's, who took him under his wing and shared his religious beliefs.

The convergence of those two ideas — risk-taking and religion — is ultimately what sent Morgan down a path that included three years with the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circus, and 12 years as a chaplain at Attica Correctional Facility before he returned to Rochester as a senior pastor in 2015.

"From the circus to the prison to the church — I don't know how that works, but it worked for me," Morgan said. "Being the senior pastor of this church was the last thing on my horizon. The Lord has a funny sense of humor sometimes."

By rebranding the church and aiming to reestablish Faith on Fire as a more contemporary congregation, Morgan's risk is a calculated one, and not (entirely) an attempt to chase down endorphins. The jump over a line of cars and through a burning wall will take place around 4 p.m. Saturday.


(Photo: Provided, John Morgan)

John "Mercury" Morgan will be riding his bicycle through a burning wall Saturday during a festival hosted by Faith on Fire Fellowship.

Both the takeoff and landing ramps are specifically engineered for the feat, and Morgan will wear a fireproof suit and helmet as well. The jump, he said, is the way he is able to convey his message to a large crowd.

"I don't want to sound too preachy or religious, but the jump is actually symbolic," Morgan said. "The takeoff ramp represents your launch into life when you reach the age of accountability. ... The burning wall represents what waits for you at the end of your life if you don't know the Lord."

For Morgan, the stunt also provides an opportunity to prove his faith. Morgan said he wants to communicate his belief that each person has a purpose in life, and he's proof that that purpose may be a little out of the ordinary.

"Nobody's going to come to hear John Morgan, but if they watch Mercury Morgan jump a bicycle through a burning wall, they're going to stop," Morgan said. "I'm no more important than anybody else, but I have a message that is critically important for everybody to hear."

GSILVAROLE@Gannett.com

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Alice Cooper ✓

May 25 at 2:32am ·

Like Page

So there are suddenly several reports of a werewolf like creature near a small town in the UK. Do you think it could be real?



A Strange Creature Has Been Spotted In England, And People Are Freaking Out.

Apparently, it stands eight feet tall.

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Pelican Takes A Long, Hard Look At His Choices

huffingtonpost.com

No one wants to wind up a jailbird.

08/06/2016 05:16 pm ET
Hilary Hanson Viral News Editor, The Huffington Post

A pelican has become a viral star after winding up in a somewhat embarrassing situation on Tuesday.

California Highway Patrol received a report about an injured pelican on the interstate in the city of Truckee, they said in a Facebook post.



When they got there, it appeared the bird wasn't injured, but he was posing a hazard flying between highway lanes and dodging cars.

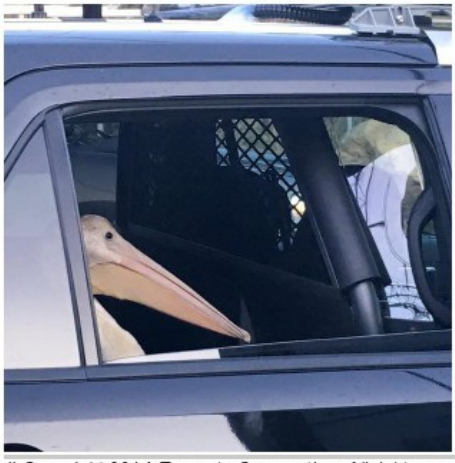
Luckily, CHP Officer Troy Griesemer, who has falconry experience, was on the scene.



"He looked tired from flying, so I knew I could get a hold of him," Griesemer told the Sacramento Bee. "This isn't the first bird I've caught. I knew what to look for, how he was going to react and how he would try to defend himself."

The pelican took a ride back to the CHP office in the cruiser before being transferred to a wildlife rescue group.

We hope he's able to stay out of trouble after this.



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People May Sense Single Photons

scientificamerican.com

nature
Nature

Experiment hints we sense light's tiniest specks "at the threshold of imagination"

- By Davide Castelvecchi, Nature magazine on July 19, 2016



Credit: ImageSource (MARS)

People can detect flashes of light as feeble as a single photon, an experiment has demonstrated—a finding that seems to conclude a 70-year quest to test the limits of human vision.

The study, published in *Nature Communications* on July 19, "finally answers a long-standing question about whether humans can see single photons — they can!" says Paul Kwiat, a quantum optics researcher at the University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign. The techniques used in the study also open up ways of testing how quantum properties—such as the ability of photons to be in two places at the same time—affect biology, he adds.

"The most amazing thing is that it's not like seeing light. It's almost a feeling, at the threshold of imagination," says Alipasha Vaziri, a physicist at the Rockefeller University in New York City, who led the work and tried out the experience himself.

Experiments on cells from frogs have shown that sensitive light-detecting cells in vertebrate eyes, called rod cells, do fire in response to single photons. But, in part because the retina processes its information to reduce 'noise' from false alarms, researchers hadn't been able to confirm whether the firing of one rod cell would trigger a signal that would be transmitted all the way to the brain. Nor was it clear whether people would be able to consciously sense such a signal if it did reach the brain. Experiments to test the limits of human vision have also had to wait for the arrival of quantum-optics technologies that can reliably produce one photon of light at a time.

In June 2015, physicist Rebecca Holmes, who works with Kwiat, reported evidence that humans can sense light flashes containing as few as three photons. (Those results are still unpublished, Kwiat says.) But that team had not yet tested the ultimate threshold of perception—the response to single photons.

In the dark

In Vaziri's experiment, three volunteers sat in total darkness for around 40 minutes, and then stared into an optical system. When they pushed a button they heard two sounds, separated by one second. Sometimes, one of the sounds was accompanied by the emission of a photon. The participants had to say on which occasion they thought they saw a photon, and how confident they were (on a scale of 1 to 3) about their sighting.

In many cases, they got it wrong; this is to be expected, given that more than 90% of photons that enter the front of the eye never even reach a rod cell, because they are absorbed or reflected by other parts of the eye. Still, participants were able to answer correctly more frequently than would be expected if they had guessed at random—and their confidence level was higher when they were right.

The three volunteers sat through a total of more than 2,400 trials in which a single photon was emitted (and many more in which it was not). That high volume of testing, the researchers say, gives them strong statistical evidence of single-photon detection.

But not all researchers think the paper is conclusive. “The only thing that I am sceptical about is that only three individuals have been tested,” says Leonid Krivitskiy, a physicist at the Agency for Science Technology and Research in Singapore. All of them were male, he adds, and the visual physiologies of women and men are known to be subtly different, he points out. But Krivitskiy is convinced that the authors’ method is capable of settling the question once and for all, if the experiment is tested on more volunteers.

Vaziri plans to test how the visual system responds to photons in various quantum states—in particular those that are in a ‘superposition’ of two simultaneous states. Some physicists have suggested that such experiments could test whether a superposition of two states could survive in a person's sensory system, and perhaps be perceived in the brain.

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Davide Castelvecchi

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Peru seizes 8 million seahorses illegally bound for Asia

Tue at 3:21pm Tue 21 Jun 2016, 3:21pm

abc.net.au

ABC News



Photo: The seahorses were seized in the port of Callao, Peru. (AFP: Peruvian Production Ministry)

Peruvian authorities have seized 8 million seahorses smuggled on a Chinese-flagged ship bound for Asia, the Government says.

Key points:

- Seahorses worth $5.4 million
- Peru banned catching seahorses in 2004
- Seahorses used for thousands of years in Chinese medicine

Officers found the dried seahorses worth nearly $US4 million ($5.4 million) in the hold of the ship at the port of Callao on June 7, a Government statement said on Monday.

The Chinese captain of the ship was arrested.

Peru banned the catching of seahorses in 2004 over concerns of overfishing fuelled by a surging export demand including in China, where they are said to be used to make medicine.

A top official in the Production Ministry, Jesus Barrientos, said Peru was considering issuing an Interpol alert to crack down on Chinese ships handling seahorses.

According to University of California, Berkeley college of natural resources, more than 24 million seahorses are sold annually for use in Chinese medicine.

Seahorse Australia in Tasmania — one of the first commercial seahorse farms in the world — exists to supply seahorses to the traditional Chinese medicine trade, with a goal of reducing the pressure on wild populations.

According to its website, seahorses are widely regarded in Chinese philosophy and have been used for thousands of years as a cure for a variety of ailments.

AFP/ABC

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AEST = Australian Eastern Standard Time which is 10 hours ahead of UTC (Greenwich Mean Time)

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Largest collection of Peruvian Antiques returned

peruthisweek.com

http://www.peruthisweek.com/news-peruvian-antiques-returned-109817

June 23, 2016

Alvaro Tassano

More than 4,000 archaeological artifacts were returned to the Ministry of Culture.



Largest collection of Peruvian Antiques returned

(Photo: Gestion/Andina)

The vast collection of archaeological and historical pieces was on display **last week** by the Ministry of Culture, to celebrate their collaboration with the **Ministry of Foreign Relations** in successful recovery of artifacts from Argentina, Canada, Chile, Spain and the United States.

The pieces include prehispanic pots and textiles, Colonial Cusco-school paintings, prehistoric bones, and Colonial hand-hammered macuquina coins (cobs).

The recovery comes as result of several years of work, based on agreements signed by Peru with different countries **to protect and return historical artifacts.** The agreements help build **22 different legal cases** claiming that the stolen pieces were smuggled out of the country to be sold in antiquities markets. One of the most famous processes was the **Janeir Aude case** in Argentina. In ran for 14 years and disputed 4,136 artifacts, including perfectly preserved ancient mummies.

Culture Minister **Alvarez Calderón** said a total, 4,174 pieces were recovered from Argentina, 88 from the United States, 79 from Chile, two from Canada and one from Spain. It was the largest collection of recovered pieces handed over at the same time to the Ministry.

Their work, along with the Ministry of Foreign Relations, have helped recover a great **number of antiquities in the past 5 years**. More than 8,000 artifacts have been returned from other countries like Germany, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Denmark, Egypt, France, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

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Southern Indiana Ghosts-Pigeon Roost

angelfire.com

http://www.angelfire.com/in4/believe/pigeonroost/page.html

Pigeon Roost Scottsburg Indiana
Investigated on 1/16/2005



Pigeon Roost Legend:

There is no "haunted" legend that I know of with this area, just a lot of history. Something about the small memorial area has always given me an unsettled feeling. Although Hwy. 31 South runs outside of the memorial it is still fairly isolated. A small trailer sits at the entrance to the memorial and graveyard which is most likely the grounds keeper. This unsettling feeling about the area is not just mine. Others have voiced their uneasiness when visiting the site. I had one person tell me that no matter when she visits she can always hear a hammer banging on something in the words. However this noise was never investigated when it was heard. Maybe it is the known history of the small settlement with its brutal battle with the Shawnee Indians, or something else. On a whim we decided to check this area out.

Directions:

From Interstate 65 take Henryville exit, and proceed east a few blocks to Highway 31 and turn north (left). The area is well marked by signs.

Date of Investigation:

January, 16 2005 11 pm. The temperature was 28 degrees with wind from the north at 8 mph. The solar weather for this night was Geomagnetic Field Storm and Solar x-rays were x class flare. The moon phase was First Quarter Moon 45.4% of Full.

History of Pigeon Roost:

A small settlement founded in 1809 spanning about a square mile and separated from other settlements by miles located in is what now the southern part of Scott County Indiana. A 44 foot limestone monument sits at the Pigeon Roost Memorial Site in remembrance and marking the mass grave of the 24 settlers killed during the war of 1812, when the small settlement was attacked by a group of Shawnee Indians on September 3, 1812. Many Native American tribes assisted the British in attacking scattered settlements in the Indiana Territory. A group of 12 Indians killed 24 settlers, sixteen of them children and five women. Kidnapped two children and burned the small settlement to the ground in the matter of about an hour.

There were survivors of the attack, many headed to blockhouses that were within miles. One of the saddest stories involving survivors was that of the Biggs family. Mrs. Biggs had gone into the woods to look for a missing cow with her three children, one an infant. Upon return to the settlement and finding it under attack she fled into the woods with her children at one time being near enough

to the Indian attackers that she could hear their footsteps. The infant began to cry and she covered its mouth with her shawl to prevent discovery, after the Indians had passed she found she had smothered the infant. With the dead infant and her other two children she stayed hidden and made it to the safety of the blockhouse by daybreak.

By September 4 the word of the massacre had spread into Charlestown Indiana and 200 armed men came to the scene to assist finding only one cabin standing the settlement charred and mutilated bodies including women and children. The group was unable to locate the Indians responsible and there is debate to which Indian group actually attacked the village.

The two kidnapped children were later found, Ginsey McCoy was found as the wife of an Indian chief west of the Mississippi River. Peter Huffman was found in Canada after being sold to another Indian tribe. He returned to Indiana in 1824 but soon returned to the Indian life he had been leading. Pigeon Roost is owned and managed by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Museums and Historic Sites



It was about 11 pm when we pulled into the small memorial area. There is a shelter area with picnic tables and the surrounding area is a cemetery. We did not see or hear or feel anything out of the ordinary. However two of the pictures I took turned out a little blurry for some reason and one has a few orbs in it. All the others were clear.



I am not sure what caused these orbs to show up. With the weather so cold that easily eliminates bugs and pollen. I guess it is possible that it is dust however the first photo and the second were taking right after each other and the first does not contain any orbs. I always stand still a few seconds before snapping photos to help prevent dust being in front of the camera.

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Ohio university's 'Pizza ATM' cooks and dispenses pies on demand

upi.com

By Ben Hooper | Aug. 5, 2016 at 2:57 PM



The "Pizza ATM" installed at Xavier University. Screenshot: KTNV-TV

CINCINNATI, Aug. 5 (UPI) -- An Ohio university unveiled a new arrival on campus: a "Pizza ATM" that cooks and dispenses pizzas on demand.

Xavier University in Cincinnati announced the Pizza ATM installed at Fenwick Hall allows students to use credit cards, debit cards or student IDs loaded with money to purchase pizzas that are then cooked on demand for three minutes at 500 degrees.

The pizzas are then placed in boxes and dispensed through a slot in the machine.

"It can store 70 pizzas at any one given time," Jude Kiah, an assistant vice president at Xavier University, told WKRC-TV.

"We were looking for a way to solve this problem of having a late-night pizza option on campus," Kiah told the Cincinnati Enquirer. "This meets our students where they're at in their residence hall."

Alec Verlin, president of Paline, said Xavier's Pizza ATM is the first in the country.

"It's exciting first of all. It's challenging a little bit because we have to adapt the machine," Verlin said.

"We like the idea of being first and innovative and trying something new," Kiah said. "There's one Pizza ATM in the U.S. and this is it."

A 12-inch diameter medium pizza costs $9 from the machine.

"I'll tell you what," a university spokesman said. "The pizza vending machine is hot."

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Plane of US WW2 pilot finally found near Bologna

06/07 thelocal.it

The Local



Plane of US WW2 pilot finally found near Bologna

Plane of US WW2 pilot finally found near Bologna

The Local · 25 Jul 2016, 16:41

Published: 25 Jul 2016 16:41 GMT+02:00

The final resting place of an American Second World War fighter pilot has been found by Italian amateur archaeologists near Bologna.

The plane, an American P-47 Thunderbolt class fighter, was unearthed on Saturday in front of the dead serviceman's emotional children and grandchildren, who had travelled to Italy to be present at the dig.

The plane once belonged to U.S Air Force pilot Loren Hintz but was shot down by a Nazi anti-aircraft gun trying to protect the German Wehrmacht as they fled from towns around the Italian city of Bologna on April 21st, 1945.

Hintz was killed just eight days before the war in Italy ended, leaving behind his five-month-old daughter, Gretchen, and his wife, who was carrying his unborn son, Martin.

Gretchen and her children were present as the resting place of their relative, who they have only ever seen in black-and-white photographs, was finally located.

"I'm deeply touched by the presence of so many people – Italian friends I never knew I had," Gretchen Hintz told Corriere during the dig.

Gretchen and other members of the Hintz family had spent the last four years trying to pinpoint the exact spot the plane fell, after coming across the name of the town 'Bagnarola di Budrio' in the US Air Force's report of Loren Hintz's final mission.

The tiny town lies on the outskirts of Bologna. Photo: Google Maps.



In a bid to find the plane, the family enlisted the help of local historian Giampiero Fabbri, who conducted interviews with the few surviving residents of Bagnarola di Budrio who witnessed it fall 71 years ago.

Once Fabbri discovered where the plane lay, he had to apply to the local council to perform a dig in the area.

"We managed to get the all clear from a court in Bologna a few days ago," he told Corriere. "It is the first time a private association has asked to perform a dig like this."

Hintz's children and grandchildren flew over from California to be present at the excavation and looked on sombrely as the wreck of the plane was found.

Before unearthing the plane, the team excavated four vertical meters of soil, which still smelt richly of petrol after more than seven decades.

The archaeologists found an engine cylinder, the cockpit's seat, a metal name tag belonging to Hintz and one of the plane's Browning machine guns.

A video of the dig can be seen below.

Excavations will continue over the coming days in the hope more of the wreckage, or even some human remains can be found and finally put to rest.

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Exhibit Focuses on Poe's Talented Family | Museum News

April 7th, 2016 by chris



RosaliePoe-tintype008

Above: Edgar's sister Rosalie Mackenzie Poe

In spite of being reared by a frugal businessman who discouraged his writing, Edgar Allan Poe became one of the world's greatest authors. Why did a boy who grew up in such a home decide to devote himself to a life in the arts? Was Poe born gifted, or was his genius the result of his upbringing? Maybe we can find some of the answers by learning about the family from which Poe was separated when he was orphaned at the age of two.

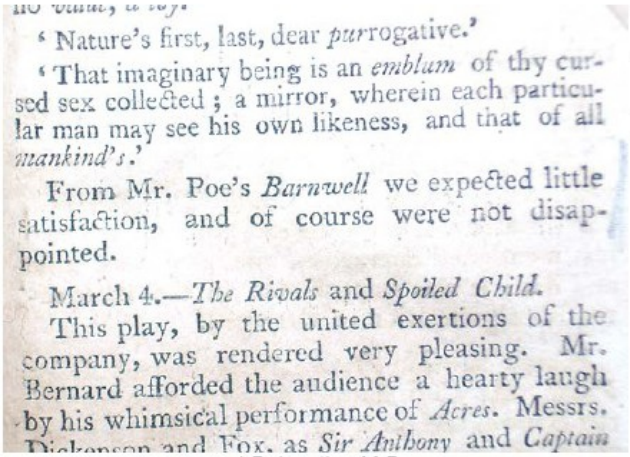


w-Rosalie_Poe_Handkerchief_Case

Above: Handkerchief Case Painted by Rosalie Mackenzie Poe

Talent runs in Edgar Allan Poe's family. Not only was Edgar a talented writer, but so was his brother William Henry Leonard Poe. His sister was a gifted musician and an art teacher. His mother was a popular actress and singer. In order to shed some light on these forgotten members of Edgar Allan Poe's family, the Poe Museum in Richmond will host a new exhibit The Unknown Poes: Edgar Allan Poe's talented Family from April 28 until June 19, 2016. The display will feature a number of Poe family artifacts including clothing, documents, and a Poe family bible. The highlight of the exhibit will be a piece of original artwork painted by Poe's sister Rosalie. The exhibit will place Poe's talent in the context of a gifted family of artists, writers, and performers.

Above: Negative review of a performance by Poe's father from 1806



‘Nature’s first, last, dear *purrogative*.’

‘That imaginary being is an *emblam* of thy cursed sex collected; a mirror, wherein each particular man may see his own likeness, and that of all *mankind’s*.’

From Mr. Poe’s *Barnwell* we expected little satisfaction, and of course were not disappointed.

March 4.—*The Rivals* and *Spoiled Child*.

This play, by the united exertions of the company, was rendered very pleasing. Mr. Bernard afforded the audience a hearty laugh by his whimsical performance of *Acres*. Messrs. Dickenson and Fox, as *Sir Anthony* and *Captain*

webPolyanthosMrPoe

The exhibit will open on April 28 from 6-9 p.m. with a special Unhappy Hour in the Poe Museum’s Enchanted Garden featuring live music by The Folly.



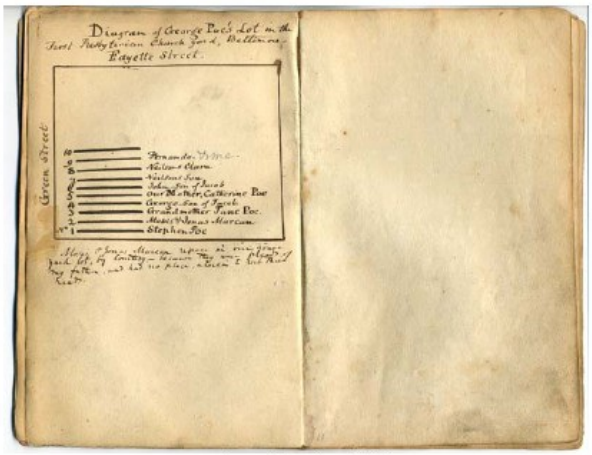
Above: Bridget Poe’s Dancing Shoes from 1805

Bridget_Poe_Dancing_Shoes



Henry_Herring_Chest_of_Drawers

Above: Chest of drawers given by Poe’s uncle Henry Herring to his daughter



w-Poe_Family_Bible

Above: Poe family bible opened to a page containing a diagram of a Poe burial plot

Poe Museum info@poemuseum.org
1914-16 East Main Street (804) 648-5523
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Richmond, VA 23223 1-888-21E-APOE

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Puzzling cliff-hanger in case of poisoned lottery winner

ap.org

By JASON KEYSER
Jun. 10, 2016 2:49 PM EDT



Poisoned Lottery Winner

FILE - This June 2012 file photo provided by WMAQ-TV in Chicago, shows Urooj Khan, center, holding...

CHICAGO (AP) — With his departure from office this week, a county medical examiner leaves behind a beguiling mystery set in motion more than three years ago with his sensational declaration that a Chicago businessman who had just won a $1 million lottery prize was poisoned by cyanide.

Cook County Medical Examiner Stephen Cina's finding that Urooj Khan's death was a homicide led to the exhumation of his body, divided his family and drew flocks of international reporters to Chicago to cover the story.

Cina, whose last day in office was Sunday, told The Associated Press he had not heard so much as a peep from police since handing the case over to them in early 2013.

Estranged family members who had voiced vague suspicions about Khan's wife or her father have quietly gone on with their lives. Attorneys for the man's wife say they've heard nothing and believe the investigation stalled shortly after police questioned her in January 2013.

"Yeah, I think the case has become dormant," said Al-Haroon Husain, an attorney who represented Khan's wife in a bitter probate fight with her stepdaughter and late husband's siblings over his lottery winnings and the rest of his estate. He's not even convinced there was foul play, adding that he thinks "the police have just stepped away."

Over the course of nearly four years, police say they have interviewed three family members: Khan's wife, daughter and father-in-law, who all had dinner with him the night he died. No one has ever been charged. But detectives are continuing to talk with family members, police spokesman Anthony Guglielmi said Friday.

"It is still very much an open and active investigation," he said, without getting into any specifics on progress, potential suspects or theories.

Khan, who moved to the U.S. from Hyderabad, India, in 1989, ran dry-cleaning businesses with his wife in the West Rogers Park neighborhood on Chicago's Northwest Side. Relatives said he was hard-working and generous and donated money to orphanages in India.

Though the increasingly devout Muslim had sworn off gambling after a religious pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia, Khan bought a scratch-off lottery ticket at a 7-Eleven near his home in June 2012. To his astonishment, it was a $1 million winner. He was going to use the money to pay off mortgages, expand his business and give a donation to a hospital.

But the 46-year-old with big dreams died on July 20, 2012, after eating dinner and going to bed. It was one day after the lottery check was issued but before he received it. Initially, the medical examiner's office ruled he died of natural causes after an external exam turned up no signs of trauma. No autopsy was conducted at the time. The default cause of death was listed as arterial sclerotic cardiovascular disease, which covers the major natural causes of death, such as a stroke or a heart attack.

But the man's anguished brother had doubts. The timing of the death and tension over the lottery win made him suspicious, he told the Chicago Tribune in 2013. At his urging, pathologists tested a peripheral blood sample that had been kept.

According to Cina, who became the chief medical examiner that September, the test came back positive for cyanide. He reclassified the death as a homicide, emphasizing that he did not believe the lethal dose could have been ingested by accident. An outside lab confirmed the results.

Khan's body was exhumed in January 2013 for further tests, but by then no cyanide was detectable in the badly decomposed remains, and it was impossible to tell how the lethal dose entered his body, Cina said in a news conference a few weeks later.

But he emphasized the county medical examiner's office had a good record, with no false positives on 340 cyanide tests on bodies over a two-year period leading up to the Khan case.

Cina said police never reached out to him after his involvement in the case ended in the spring of 2013.

Meantime, Khan's wife, Shabana Ansari, continues to work at the dry-cleaning businesses. On a recent afternoon, she was hanging a shirt on an overhead conveyor at one of them as a handful of employees milled around. She refused to talk with a visiting reporter.

Steven Kozicki, a criminal defense lawyer she hired after police questioned her for four and a half hours without an attorney in 2013, says he's instructed her not to talk anyone, including police, who he says have not tried to follow up in a couple of years.

Guglielmi says Ansari refused requests to sit for a polygraph test.

Khan's daughter from an earlier marriage, who decided to live with an aunt after her father's death, is now a student at Loyola University Chicago.

A probate settlement split Khan's estate — including the lottery check — between her and her estranged stepmother and barred either side from filing a wrongful death lawsuit against the other unless the police investigation turns up evidence.

"Everybody has their suspicions and innuendos but at the end of the day at a certain point no matter what it is you just have to move on with your life," said the wife's attorney, Husain.

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'Pokemon Go' player finds $2,000 at Pokestop in New Jersey

July 28, 2016

yahoo.com

HACKETTSTOWN, N.J. (AP) — A "Pokemon Go" player has found $2,000 in cash at a Pokestop in New Jersey.

Hackettstown police say the player notified a nearby business Wednesday that he had found the money at a Pokestop, where players can get free in-game items, like an egg that can hatch into a full monster. The player said he would turn the money over to police.

Around the same time, the person who lost the money reported it missing near the business. An officer went there, and an employee told the officer the money had been found.

After checking surveillance video, the officer located the player, who turned over the cash.

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This Pastor Has Convinced Us: Pokemon Are Actually Cyber-Demons

huffingtonpost.com

Who knew Satan would create such a fun game?

07/14/2016 06:09 pm 18:09:36
Viral News Editor, The Huffington Post



Like, this is obviously scary.

Guys. Maybe Rick Wiles is onto something.

The self-described conservative, orthodox Christian observed on his "Trunews" radio show on Monday that "Pokemon Go" sure has made a lot of churches into Pokestops — landmarks where people can pick up virtual tools for the game.

Around the U.S., some places of worship have used this to their advantage, displaying signs inviting players to come in for services while they're there.

But Wiles suspects something far more sinister is afoot. That Pikachu may *look* cute and friendly, but it's probably a cyber-demon.

"The enemy, Satan, is targeting churches with virtual, digital, cyber-demons," he said. "I believe this thing is a magnet for demonic powers."

He didn't immediately reply to a request for comment, and we'll be honest — at first we laughed off this idea. But that was before we noticed this disturbing pattern:

Porn
Orgies
Kristianity, spelled wrong
Edible underwear
Mad abortion
Orgies again
No God

HOLY @#*(#(&%#^&#(.

Noting that the "Pokemon Go" app is likely to lead players to Christian churches, Wiles posed a serious question about national security.

"What if this technology is transferred to Islamic jihadists? And Islamic jihadists have an app that shows them where Christians are located geographically."

A solid point, since before the game existed, there was literally no way to find these places.

H/T Right Wing Watch

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Pokemon Go spurs lawyers to stop and consider legal issues

By Debra Cassens Weiss
Posted Jul 13, 2016 08:00 am CDT

abajournal.com



Wachiwit / Shutterstock.com

Pokemon characters are on the loose, and it's your job to catch and collect them.

That's the premise of the new Pokemon Go app, which uses your phone's GPS and clock to detect where you are and make Pokemon characters appear on your phone screens, Vox explains. The Pokemon characters may be in public places such as parks, beaches and even bathrooms, and players have to go to the locations to find them.

Or even the courthouse, suggests Miami Herald courts reporter David Ovalle in a tweet. "I'm told there are Pokemons in the courthouse hallways," he writes @DavidOvalle305. "I have no idea what that means, but they better not approach the jurors."

Some lawyers say Pokemon Go, an "augmented reality" game, raises legal issues and public safety concerns. Alabama lawyer Keith Lee, writing at his Associate's Mind blog, says his legal questions include:

Does placing a Pokemon character on a private property, without permission, affect the owner's interest in exclusive possession of the property? Does it create an attractive nuisance? Does owning real property extend property rights to intellectual property elements that are placed on it? Is there liability for placing the characters on private property or in dangerous locations?

Michigan lawyer Brian Wassom raises other legal issues in a post for the Hollywood Reporter's THR, Esq. blog. Augmented reality games can lead to competition for the use of the same physical spaces, disrupting the ability of players and nonplayers to enjoy the place, and possibly leading to violence, he says. Could government limit the players in a public space? Would that bring a First Amendment challenge?

Wassom also sees a risk of injury for players who are "wandering through the physical world while staring through a phone screen." New York lawyer Peter Pullano makes a similar point in an interview with 13WHAM in which he raises the possibility of distractions for drivers. "Even though you may be looking for your Pikachu while you're driving, that's not going to impress your officer," Pullano said.

LawNewz points out that the game's terms of service disclaim liability for property damage, personal injury or death while playing the game, as well as claims based on violation of any other applicable law. The game also has a notice that generally requires arbitration of disputes.

Hat tip to the Daily Caller.

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Odd | Yahoo News - Latest News & Headlines
July 17, 2016 yahoo.com

https://www.yahoo.com/news/hampshire-city-police-pokemon-lure-fugitives-155312560.html?nhp=1

New Hampshire city police use Pokemon Go to lure fugitives

MANCHESTER, N.H. (AP) — Police in New Hampshire's largest city have gotten the Pokemon Go bug, trying to lure fugitives with the popular app.

A post on the Manchester Police Department Facebook page announces that police recently detected one of the more rare Pokemon characters — a Charizard — in the booking area. The post invites those whose names appear on a list linked to the post to be "one of the lucky ones" to come capture the Charizard.

The list includes the names of the more than 500 fugitives on the department's wanted persons roundup.

Sgt. Eric Knight said Sunday the post has yet to net an arrest. But it's been popular with its Facebook followers.

Since the post went up late Saturday night, it's captured more than 13,000 "likes."

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-THE WILD HUNT-
MODERN PAGAN NEWS & COMMENTARY

The Wild Hunt

Pokémon and the Great Occult Scare

Heather Greene — July 17, 2016

Over the past month, the new mobile virtual game *Pokémon Go* has taken the world by storm. The app is now reportedly the biggest mobile game in U.S. history. According to the SurveyMonkey Intelligence blog, *Pokémon Go* has exceeded by several million the daily peak users record held by *Candy Crush*. Within "three days of release" the game attracted more users than Twitter and now, according to the blog, the breakout game is aiming "for Snapchat and Google Maps."



Rattata found roadside in South Georgia [Photo Credit: E. Howard] [Photo Credit: Jarek Tuszyński / Wikimedia] Pokemon Tarot Deck [Publicity Image] Pokemon show up in the most unseemingly of locations [Photo Credit: E. Howard] Another one caught. [Photo Credit: E. Howard]

What is *Pokémon Go*? It is a mobile game application created by the same team that originated the Pokémon franchise in 1996. Just as in the original concept, the user is a Pokémon trainer who must gather Pokémon, or fictional "pocket monsters," to train for battle. Using GPS locators, the game "places" Pokémon virtually within the users real space. They are on sidewalks, in homes and in buildings. Trainers can "see" when these virtual creatures are near and must get within a certain distance to catch them. But there is far more to it than that, including PokeGyms, PokeSpots, battles, leveling up, teams and more.

But what does *Pokémon Go*, or Pokémon in general, have to do with the occult? The easy answer: *absolutely nothing*.

However, when are we ever satisfied with the easy answer?

So let's get out our flux capicitors and head back in time 20 years to when Pokémon first arrived on the pop culture scene.



Rattata found roadside in South Georgia [Photo Credit: E. Howard]

In the not-so-distant past, Satoshi Tajiri imagined a video game that involved users catching bugs and training them to fight. After six years of consideration and negotiations, the idea became *Pocket Monsters*, which was shortened to *Pokémon*. In February 1996, Nintendo released two Pokémon games for its popular handheld Game Boy system. The games weren't an instant hit, but there was enough buzz for the launch of the first generation card game in October of that year, and an anime cartoon series the following spring.

And the rest, as they say, is history.

It didn't take long for the new franchise to generate backlash. Excitement surrounding the card game built to near fever-pitch among children. Many school officials opted to ban the game from their campuses due to a variety reasons, including: distraction, competition, excessive commercialism, fights, and the violence of in-game battles themselves.

Along with those practical and secular concerns, another issue arose; this one of a moral variety. Religious groups began to speak out against the franchise's promotion of immorality, which some labeled satanic. They equated the game's symbology and monstrous qualities to demonology, mysticism, Witchcraft, Wicca and modern Paganism. In one video sermon, a pastor explains:

> Pokémon is a game that teaches children how to enter into the world of witchcraft. How to cast spells. How to use psychic phenomena. How to put to work supernatural powers against their enemies. How to fantasy role play… Pokémon World is a world of the demonic, of the satanic.

Several of the Pokémon histories suggest that reactions, similar to that above, led to the creation of the Christian card game *Redemption*. However, this Bible-based trading card game was created and released an entire year before the Pokémon came on the scene. *Redemption* was more a reaction to the lingering memories of *Dungeons & Dragons* and the contemporary success of *Magic: The Gathering* and other similar gaming offshoots.

Redemption's creator Rob Anderson said, "Many of the games available had dark and horrific themes […] Much of what is offered in the collectible trading card game market is difficult to reconcile with the Christian faith." Although Anderson's card game preceded Pokémon, the idea was the same and the arrival of Pokémon only fueled the flames of that fear and ideology.

The Christian backlash became so prevalent that the Catholic Pope reportedly spoke out. In 2000, the Vatican TV satellite station announced, on his behalf, that "Pokémon trading cards and the computer game is [sic] 'full of inventive imagination,' has [sic] no 'harmful moral side effects' and is [sic] based on the notion of 'intense friendship.' "

While the Pope's alleged message signaled his followers to *relax*, others, outside of the Christian and Catholic world, remained unconvinced. As reported in 2001 by the BBC and other outlets, as the cards reached the Muslim world, national leaders began actively banning the franchise because they believed it promoted gambling and other immoral activities. Saudi leaders specifically called it a "Jewish conspiracy" that promoted Zionism. Interestingly, these same leaders also identified as a problem the franchise's use of "crosses, sacred for Christians and triangles, significant for Freemasons."

In 2001, the Anti-Defamation League responded to the cries of "Jewish conspiracy," calling them "outrageous." But, several years prior, ADL had its own concerns with two specific Pokémon cards (Golbat and Ditto) that contained what looked like a swastika. As explained in an ADL press release, the symbol on the cards were "intended to represent a 'manji' sign ascribed to Buddhism and Hinduism." These versions of the two cards were only suppose to be released in Japan where the image would be understood as such. However, due to the game's popularity, the cards made it to the U.S. where the symbols were read as a swastika.

In 1999, Abraham H. Foxman, ADL national director said, "In today's shrinking world due to globalization, what is deemed appropriate or acceptable by one culture may have a significantly different meaning in another." Nintendo did reportedly take the ADL complaint seriously and responded to the group's satisfaction.



[Photo Credit: Jarek Tuszyński / Wikimedia]

In the same year, *Time* magazine published an interview with creator Satoshi Tajiri. While the conversation focused on his work, the interviewer did briefly ask about criticisms specifically concerning the immorality or "satanic" nature of the game. He responded, "I never heard of that! [Laughs] I heard there was a guy who criticized [kid's book character] *Harry Potter* because of the magic. But I saw the author, and she seemed really nice. The critic seemed like a grouchy mean guy."

Putting things in context, this era, 1996-2000, occurred just after the notorious satanic panics in the U.S. and U.K., and it also followed on the tail end of a pop culture Witch craze. This was a period that saw the release of *The Craft* and the reign of *The X-Files*, *Sabrina, and Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. J.K. Rowling had just released a new book called *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, which would soon become an international best-selling series and movie franchise.

While the pop culture engine generally and slowly shifted from a high concentration of satanic Witches to other occult or fantastic themes, the interest in magic and mysticism never died. Cultural fears and desires, relating to social issues, politics and more, continued to play out in various fantasy narratives. Pokémon played into this collective dreaming.

Additionally, the game was a feature of the shrinking global culture, which was precipitated by the internet and an increasingly tech-driven world. Not only was the card game a symbol of this new world-based digital cultural phenomenon, but it was also a distraction for a generation of children, who were showing a decreasing interest in attending religious services, as noted by Pew Forum.

Now let's go back to the future….

It is now 2012, with the internet and social media in full swing. A blog site called *Playing4Real* published a mock *Time* magazine interview with Satoshi Tajiri. The post, titled, "Pokémon Creator Admits Games are Anti-Christian, Aimed Towards Satanists," was not marked clearly as satire. The mock interview has Satoshi Tajiri saying, in part:

> Tajiri: Yes. Pokémon is essentially the correct answer towards life, not Christianity. Everything presented in the game is the opposite of what Christians may believe. Some have said that the game promotes voodoo or magic, and I agree in the sense that there are many things that occur in nature that are unexplainable …

Any regular user of social media might expect what happened next. The *Playing4Real* post was shared with wild abandon. The fake interview inspired a new round of Pokémon backlash, feeding any still lingering demonic origin theories.

For example, as published in 2010, opponent Brett Peterson compared the Pokémon universe's use of the elements as equivalent to that use in modern Pagan practice. Peterson wrote, "Most Pagan and earth based religions and philosophies find power in the Four Elements? Earth, Water, Fire, and Wind. These are the energy cards in the Pokémon game! […] What are we allowing to come into our homes!"

Yet, at the very same time, another cultural reality was being birthed, one that makes that same connection between the occult and modern Paganism, but from an entirely different angle. This new reality can be found embedded in the growing practice of Pop Culture Paganism. As an example, the owner of the *Pokemon Paganism* Tumblr blog writes:

> I have been working for a while now on a Pokémon elemental correspondence system based on a combination of the two most prominent systems from antiquity (Western and Eastern). So far I think I've come up with a pretty fleshed out system and I hope to be able to make a few posts on it in the coming weeks. My goal is to have a workable magic system to be used alongside my devotional work with the various Legendary/Mythical Pokémon. All and all I'm hoping to form a more vibrant practice that is more immersive and can also work alongside some of my more traditional polytheist practices.

The majority of people integrating Pokémon into magical practice were born in the Millennial generation or are younger. That should not be surprising, because these are the same people who grew up with the original Pokémon franchise of the 1990s.



Pokemon Tarot Deck [Publicity Image]

Tumblr user Kitty, who runs the *Pop Culture Paganism* blog, also posts and reblogs notes concerning the use of Pokémon in religious, spiritual or magical practice. And, in 2014, Cokujyo Eikyu created a Pokémon Tarot deck, now in its second edition.

Let's move forward in time again to the present.

This year, 2016, marks the 20th anniversary of Pokémon and the release of its arguably most popular game, *Pokémon Go*. And, although it's based on the same gaming premise, the backlash has been decidedly different because of the way it has played out within our collective world cultures.

The new game is getting people outside and moving around, even if that movement is zombie-

like or resembles herds of wild animals on a David Attenborough special. One Tumblr user wrote, "Pokémon Go deserves a nobel peace prize for getting me off my ass."



Pokemon show up in the most unseemingly of locations [Photo Credit: E. Howard]

Additionally, the company has created what it calls *PokeStops* and *PokeGyms*, which are actual places where Pokémon congregate and where battles happen. Users must be physically within range of these locations to catch these wanted Pokémon and engage with the game further. As a result, Pokératti, those masses of players, are showing up at random locations, with phones in hand, and sometimes are even putting themselves at risk of being arrested for trespassing.

Interestingly, many churches are reportedly labeled as PokeGyms and, as a result, groups of young people are showing up at their doorsteps to play the game. Many church leaders, such as in the Church of England, are beginning to see this phenomenon as a positive development. While the Pokératti may not stick around for sermons, leaders see this move as "a good way to start a conversation that may lead on to other things," as noted by the BBC.

The same Pokémon game, which once was thought to have driven people from religion, is now being considered a tool to potentially lead them back.

And churches aren't the only institutions looking to take advantage of the PokeStop or PokeGym feature. Companies, organizations and event planners are using the built-in "lure" or the "incense" game actions to bring Pokémon to their locations in hopes of attracting visitors, customers or the like. The more Pokémon at the site, or the stronger and rarer the Pokémon, the more Pokératti show up.

The Wild Hunt's own Cara Schulz, who is running for political office in her hometown of Burnsville, has teamed up with a local restaurant and is using the game's lure feature to attract people to her campaign event. It is a clever marketing tool that creates a pickup community space, which could potentially "lead on to other things." As we move into Pagan Pride and fall festival season, this tool may be a marketing concept that organizers can employ to attract visitors to their own public events.

However, before a planner jumps on the band wagon, there is a downside. Do you want groups of gamers lingering on your doorstop? These players are typically more interested in catching Pokémon than the services being offered. This fact has caused problems worldwide where players create hazards for real shoppers or similar. The U.S. Holocaust Museum Memorial, for example, was made a PokeStop and has been reportedly attracting groups of loud and disrespectful Pokératti.

"Playing the game is not appropriate in the museum, which is a memorial to the victims of Nazism," Andrew Hollinger, the museum's communications director, told the Washington Post. "We are trying to find out if we can get the museum excluded from the game."

As noted earlier, the PokeStops and PokeGyms are chosen by the company, and only recently has it opened up the option to suggest new locations. The system is not at all monetized, but the company has suggested that it may be in the future.

Another organization contending with Pokératti is the Westboro Baptist Church. The location was made a PokeGym, attracting battling trainers who are now allegedly vying for the right to control this

particular gym in order to "troll the Church." The church's leaders responded with their own Pokémon-inspired message saying, "Pokémon Go and Sin No More." One spokesperson told USA Today that they are using the "language that is understood."



Another one caught. [Photo Credit: E. Howard]

Today the Pokémon franchise, which began as a simple video game, has now become a viable tool within a magical system, an exercise method, a community-building activity, a marketing strategy, and a political weapon. At the same time, the game is still inspiring the same backlash that it did in 1990s, including new conspiracy theories, angry sermons and fatwas.

Going back to the original question: what does Pokémon have to do with the occult? The easy response, as said earlier, is *absolutely nothing*.

But human culture never allows for that level of simplicity. Therefore, the actual answer is "a whole lot."

Happy hunting.

Get ready for the seventh generation in November as a new wave of danger hits the market.



Heather is a freelance writer and journalist, living in the Deep South. She has worked with Lady Liberty League and has formerly served as Public Information Officer for Dogwood Local Council and Covenant of the Goddess. Heather's work has been published in Circle Magazine and elsewhere. She has a masters degree in Film Theory, Criticism and History with a background in the performing and visual arts.

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Pokémon Go players find naked woman vandalizing Westport church

By Laura Weiss
Updated 12:44 pm, Friday, July 15, 2016

ctpost.com

http://www.westport-news.com/news/article/Naked-woman-found-vandalising-Westport-church-by-8380073.php



Signs of vandalism remain in the prayer garden at St. Luke Church in Westport. Two young men playing Pokemon Go found a naked woman vandilizing the prayer garden of St. Lukes Church in Westport, Conn. on Wednesday, July 13, 2016. Photo: Contributed Photo / Contributed Photo / Connecticut Post



A naked woman discovered by two men playing Pokemon Go is accused of damaging statues and lighting at St. Luke Church in Westport, Conn. on Wednesday, July 16, 2016. Photo: Contributed Photo / Contributed Photo / Connecticut Post



A naked woman discovered by two men playing Pokemon Go is accused of damaging statues and lighting at St. Luke Church in Westport, Conn. on Wednesday, July 16, 2016. Photo: Contributed Photo / Contributed Photo / Connecticut Post



A naked woman discovered by two men playing Pokemon Go is accused of damaging statues and lighting at St. Luke Church in Westport, Conn. on Wednesday, July 16, 2016. Photo: Contributed Photo / Contributed Photo / Connecticut Post



A vandalized statue of the Virgin Mary, trash and other materials lie in a prayer garden at St. Luke Church in Westport on Wednesday. Two men found a woman vandalizing the garden.



An overturned bench is among the signs of vandalism at St. Luke Church in Westport.

WESTPORT, Conn. — "Pokemon Go" led two men into a shocking situation Wednesday afternoon.

While playing the popular mobile game sweeping the nation, the men were led into the prayer garden of St. Luke's Church in Westport on July 13 where they found an unidentified naked woman ripping apart the grounds.



A naked woman discovered by two men playing Pokemon Go is accused of damaging statues and lighting at St. Luke Church in Westport, Conn. on Wednesday, July 16, 2016.

The woman threw a statue of the Virgin Mary onto the ground, pulled lights out of the garden, turned over benches and threw garbage from her car into the pond, Sister Maureen Fleming said. The woman also put garbage in the baptismal pond inside the church's indoor gathering space. Fleming called 911 immediately.

Police committed the 40-year-old Bridgeport resident to Norwalk Hospital for evaluation, Lt. David Farrell said. He said the woman was acting irrationally and police were more focused on getting her help for a likely medical, medication-related or mental illness problem than to make an arrest.

The investigation is currently open and police will follow up with the woman to determine whether the incident resulted from a medical or mental-health issue. If they determine her actions were intentional, charges could be possible but police believe that is unlikely, Farrell said.

Damage done to the church is "all very fixable," Fleming said. Police helped clean up the damage when they arrived, but the garden will still need new lighting, its fountain fixed and repair to the hand of the statue, which was imported from Italy.

Fleming's office overlooks the garden, but she had been out for two hours aiding a refugee family that the church is helping to sponsor when the woman arrived.

"We all feel so sorry for this poor woman," Fleming said. "Whatever drove her to this, she really snapped and that's very disconcerting - that if I'd been here maybe I could have helped before it happened."

LWeiss@hearstmediact.com / @LauraEWeiss16

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'Pokemon Tax' to balance budget met with skepticism

fox43.com

Posted 5:43 PM, July 14, 2016, by Matt Maisel, Updated at 05:44pm, July 14, 2016

HARRISBURG, Pa. -- Pennsylvania lawmakers needed to figure out how to pay for its new $31.6 billion state budget.

Specifically, coming up with approximately $1.2 billion in revenues to bridge the budget's deficit.

After two weeks of debate, Republicans and Democrats agreed on a new tax never seen before in Pennsylvania, and one which would help finalize a revenue package that Governor Tom Wolf would agree to sign: a digital downloads tax.

Essentially, the state's 6% sales tax on buying items in a store will soon go into effect for online purchases, as well.

"If you were purchasing items in a more traditional manner, be it buying a book, a CD, or other hard, tangible things, those digital things will now be taxed at the same rate," said Jennifer Kocher, spokesperson for the Senate Republican Caucus.

The digital download tax is expected to generate $50 million in revenue for the 2016-17 fiscal year.

It cleared both chambers with bipartisan support, passing the House 116-75 and the Senate 28-22. However, many Central Pennsylvania conservative lawmakers, who have taken a hard stance on any new taxes, were left dismayed by the vote.

"I'm not excited that we're figuring out a new way to tax people," said Rep. Stephen Bloom (R-Cumberland).

Specifically, Rep. Bloom wasn't pleased with how the digital download tax would also impact any mobile phone application purchases. He even tweeted on Wednesday, "Yes, Gov. Wolf's **#PokemonTax** is about to hit Pennsylvania. For real."

> Yes, Gov. Wolf's #PokemonTax is about to hit Pennsylvania. For real. https://t.co/yKiHcLYi3u
>
> — Rep. Stephen Bloom (@RepBloom) July 13, 2016

Speaking with Bloom on Thursday, he responded to his tweet, "I'm thinking, well, everyone has been talking the last couple days about the Pokemon Go 'app', and there are things in the Pokemon Go app you can buy. Now, every time you make an in-app purchase, that will be taxed by the state of Pennsylvania."
However, the digital download tax is not considered a tax increase, says Kocher, like a personal income tax or sales tax hike.
"We feel like this is a tax of choice," Kocher responded. "People choose to do these certain things, and so they will be paying taxes, as opposed to taxing one's income and the broad based taxes

which affect everyone."

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Rick Wiles: Pokémon Go, 'Purge' Movie Target Christians

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Rick Wiles: Pokémon Go, 'Purge' Movie Target Christians

Submitted by Nabi Dressler on Friday, 7/15/2016 10:02 am

On yesterday's edition of "Trunews," host Rick Wiles continued his condemnation of the "Pokémon demons" inhabiting the game Pokémon Go, claiming that the game "could be used for the elimination of Christians" by showing players where Christians live. He predicted an onslaught of crime akin to the "The Purge: Election Year" movie.

"Churches are the number one sites on the app that are containing these Pokémon demons that people are trying to find," Wiles said. "The number one site on the app are churches. So, if they are creating a technology that could be used for the elimination of Christians, here are the churches, here are the homes of the pastor, the elders, the Sunday school teachers."

Wiles continued, "This movie, this 'Purge: Election Year,' are they preparing the minds of young people for a day of rage? I mean, we now, we have Anonymous calling for a day of rage. Are they whipping up this bloodlust, hoping that they can ignite it, they can get this fuse burning by October?"

"What do we do if Islamic leaders, radical, you know, Black Panther party leaders, all these whacked-out guys start saying, 'We need a purge, we need a day of rage, we need a purge?'" Wiles asked.

"This is what the Lord told me in 1998 was coming," Wiles claimed. "I saw a day of jihad, a day of bloodletting, that what the Lord showed me in '98 was pandemonium, people being killed, just innocent people being killed in their homes, being pulled out of their cars, being killed, people walking down the street, being slaughtered."

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'Ghost man' who smeared poo on woman's door for seven months arrested

14:59, 4 Aug 2016 Updated 14:59, 4 Aug 2016 By Ross Logan

mirror.co.uk



'Ghost' arrested for smearing faeces and urine on a woman's door



CEN



CEN

A man who dressed as a "ghost" and smeared faeces and urine on a woman's door for seven months has been finally been arrested.

Security footage shows the creepy figure - wearing a mask, bed sheet, bright red shoes and long black wig - walking through the corridors of an apartment block and stopping at the victim's door.

He then produces what looks like a bag of poo and begins daubing the excrement on the entrance to the flat.

The ghostly apparition 'appears' at the door

Chinese news website CCTV reported that the campaign of intimidation started in January when the victim, named as Ms Yang, received a note accusing her of "interfering" with another person's family.

Although the woman replied with a note of her own saying she could explain the situation face-to-face, the strange ghost man began appearing at her door, leaving behind a disgusting trail of human waste.

Ms Yang installed CCTV outside of her home to catch the culprit - although one camera was destroyed by the aggressor in July.

Man orders strippers for own FUNERAL as they give coffin lapdance near horrified grieving relatives

He then proceeds to smear poo on the woman's door

But on Tuesday, police in Dali, in China's southwest Yunnan Province, said they had arrested a 42-year-old man as part of an investigation into the strange attacks.

He is reportedly being held for 20 days as police carry out further enquiries.

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Watch police chasing UFO down street in one of world's most bizarre pursuits

21:54, 4 Aug 2016 Updated 21:56, 4 Aug 2016 By Elle Griffiths

mirror.co.uk



Residents were treated to a bizarre sight when they witnessed 'extraterrestrial life' appearing to finally make contact with the local police.

A tiny UFO took it upon itself to travel down the streets of Gorey and it wasn't long before it caught the attention of the Gardai, in Gorey, Ireland.

After an incredibly low-speed chase, Gardai soon caught up with the unidentified driving vehicle and found that it was very much terrestial.

Local artist Ali Kemal Ali created the UFO as part of an art collective called the Third Space Pop Up art Show which took place on July 29 at Gorey Park.



The 'UFO' careers down the street
Garda police chase a UFO down the streets of Gorey, County Wexford

He also shot the video and took many photos of the Gardai interacting with his creation.

Once the Gardai deemed the vehicle as harmless, they soon sent it off on its merry way.

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Red-faced cops weren't expecting to find this saucy item when they staged rescue

08:44, 1 Jul 2016 Updated 09:57, 1 Jul 2016 By Kirstie McCrum

mirror.co.uk

Police rescue SEX DOLL from apartment after getting reports about 'lifeless woman' in her underwear



Facebook/Politie Amsterdam Oost Watergraafsmeer

The 'lifeless woman' cops found was actually a sex doll, much to their embarrassment

Police were left embarrassed after they staged a daring rescue of a "lifeless woman" - only to find out it was a SEX DOLL.

Officers were responding to a report from neighbours who were concerned by a woman who had been standing still for a prolonged period of time.

The team, in Amsterdam, who attended the call said they witnessed a woman dressed in her underwear from outside, but when they rang the doorbell she would not answer.

When they broke down the door, they said on a Facebook post that they "indeed found a lifeless woman," but she was "made of plastic and filled with air" as she was a sex doll .

Police say that they moved to doll away from the window to prevent any future confusion.



Getty

Unsettling film shows how sex dolls are made

Cops in Amsterdam were dispatched after neighbours reported a woman in peril

It's unclear whether they have spoken to the resident about the call.

(edited)1 day ago
Dave227
I hope the police let her down gently, after such a shock!

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Slick escape: polygamous sect leader uses olive oil to slip free of FBI tracker

Sam Levin in San Francisco
Tuesday 12 July 2016 Last modified on Tuesday 12 July 2016

theguardian.com

Lyle Jeffs, who was on house arrest facing fraud charges, escapes FBI's GPS monitor by pouring 'some kind of lubricant' believed to be olive oil on his ankle



Polygamous sect leader Lyle Jeffs leaving a federal courthouse in Salt Lake City in January 2015. Photograph: Rick Bowmer/AP Photo of Lyle Jeffs released by the FBI's Salt Lake City division. Photograph: FBI website

A leader of the polygamous Utah sect of the Mormon church, who is facing federal fraud charges, escaped from a GPS tracking device using olive oil or another kind of lubricant, according to the FBI.

Lyle Jeffs of the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (FLDS) was released from jail on 9 June pending a trial on charges that he and others swindled the federal government out of millions of dollars in food stamps.

Less than two weeks after a judge released him, Jeffs violated his house arrest, according to the FBI in Utah, which issued a warrant for the 56-year-old's arrest.

Now, federal investigators say they believe Jeffs escaped the FBI's monitoring by pouring olive oil or a similar substance onto his ankle to allow him to remove a bracelet that was tracking his whereabouts.

"There was evidence at the home that he had used some sort of lubricant to slide the GPS tracker off of his ankle, and we do believe it was olive oil," said FBI spokeswoman Sandra Yi Barker. She said there was "damage" to the bracelet, but "it wasn't enough to trigger an alert to the federal agents".

Federal prosecutors, along with an estranged member of the family, had previously urged the government not to release Lyle, arguing that he would flee.



Photo of Lyle Jeffs released by the FBI's Salt Lake City division.

Officials discovered Jeffs had escaped after he did not respond to an inquiry, prompting officers to visit his home, Barker said. The search remains underway.

Jeffs is one of 11 FLDS leaders arrested in February in one of the largest recents crackdowns on the controversial sect, which is based on the Arizona-Utah border and split from the official Mormon church in 1890.

Federal prosecutors have alleged that since 2011, Jeffs and other church leaders have orchestrated a sophisticated fraud scheme in which members would illegally divert food-stamp proceeds, which are meant for low-income families.

Jeffs and other leaders engaged in a conspiracy to defraud the

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Snap) and gave members instructions on how to avoid government detection, according to an indictment.

In one common tactic, they would allegedly buy groceries with food stamps and then give the supplies to the church's communal "FLDS Storehouse" through which leaders would divide up the goods. Unauthorized members would also use food-stamp cards, prosecutors said.

Jeffs has been handling the daily affairs of the sect in Hildale, Utah since his brother Warren Jeffs is serving a life sentence for sexually assaulting young girls. He took girls as young as 12 to be his brides.

Followers believe Warren Jeffs directly channels the voice of God, and before he was jailed, Lyle had been communicating his brothers' orders from prison.

The US department of justice won a separate criminal case earlier this year after it sued the towns of Hildale and Colorado City, Arizona, alleging that the church controlled the communities and discriminated against residents who aren't FLDS members.

Jeffs' public defender declined to comment.

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'Haunted' school will be exorcised before demolition

14:14, 30 Jun 2016 Updated 14:24, 30 Jun 2016 By Nigel Wallace

mirror.co.uk

'Possessed' school where priests sacrificed 'to the devil' will be 'exorcised' before demolition



SWNS

The paranormal investigation team will decide whether the former school is actually haunted

A paranormal investigation team has been called in to perform an exorcism on a 'haunted', abandoned school.

The UK's leading exorcism team, Ghostech Paranormal Investigations have been tasked with driving out the ghouls at Stacklands Retreat House.

The former Kent school is set to be knocked down, 11 years after closing.

Myths have long-surrounded the building, including a tale of priests who were sacrificed there nearly 80 years ago when its owner turned to satanism.

The paranormal team have now been drafted in to find out for certain whether it is actually haunted.

Lead investigator and presenter Jeff Young, 52, said: "We are going to gather as much overnight evidence at Stacklands Retreat House as we can.

"We went there in the day time, and when we set up our cameras we picked up a woman's voice saying devil worshipping had been going on, and there were orbs flying around my feet."



SWNS

Lead investigator Jeff Young will perform an exorcism of Stacklands Retreat House

Ghostech are renowned for using a range of expensive and complex equipment, including digital recorders, electronic voice phenomena and cameras with colour spectrums.

Jeff had tracked down the death certificate of the allegedly satanic owner, and had found some prayers which used to be recited at the house.

Locals reckon it is haunted by priests who were sacrificed there almost 80 years ago to Satan.

Established in the US, Jeff claims Ghostech's "reputation which has grown and grown" after being named as one of the leading paranormal investigation teams in the UK.

Croydon-born Jeff said: "I had some strange experiences when I was a teenager. "I grew up seeing things, so I was interested in the paranormal from a young age.



SWNS

Stacklands Retreat House is due to be demolished after the exorcism



SWNS

Rumours of satanism surround Stacklands Retreat House

"I liked things like UFOs and got ideas from things on American TV."

The investigations team was formed five years ago they gathered together to help explore places across the UK which may be haunted.

The 52-year-old added: "We look at locations which have never been investigated before, to see if all this stuff is actually true.

"Because we're not backed by any TV company, we won't try and make things more exciting than they are. We show you everything."



SWNS

The paranormal investigation team will decide whether the former school is actually haunted

A planning application has been submitted to demolish the retreat house and outbuildings to build four detached homes with double garages in its place but the application has not yet been accepted.

Ghostech will be carrying out a night investigation at Stacklands in the coming weeks.

Comments
21 hours ago
CrazyTrain
Sceptics and believers alike would i'm sure feel some bad juju on that site.
2 days ago
RavenwolfHorsechief
BIT STUPID THAT, BUILDING NEW HOMES N THE SAME LAND? HEAVEN HELP THOSE THAT MOVE IN THEM, THEY'LL GET ALL SORTS COMING IN!
2 days ago
Carthanachta

"I had some strange experiences when I was a teenager. I grew up seeing things," Strange, so did I, usually on a Saturday night after spending a long time in the pub!
2 days ago
macdaddypastyman
The UK's leading exorcism team? The UK's most convincing con artists more like!! What a crock!!!!
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Thunder Energies Corporation Announces Apparent Detection of Anomalous Entities in Tallahassee, Florida

June 16, 2016 5:45 PM yahoo.com

http://finance.yahoo.com/news/thunder-energies-corporation-announces-apparent-214500258.html

Sat, Jun 18, 2016, 3:12AM EDT - US Markets are closed

TARPON SPRINGS, FL / ACCESSWIRE / June 16, 2016 / Thunder Energies Corp (TNRG) has recently detected invisible entities in our terrestrial environment with the revolutionary Santilli telescope with concave lenses (Trade Mark and patent pending by Thunder Energies). Thunder Energies Corporation has previously presented confirmations of the apparent existence of antimatter galaxies, antimatter asteroids and antimatter cosmic rays detected in preceding tests. In this breaking news, Thunder Energies presents evidence for the existence of Invisible Terrestrial Entities (ITE) of the dark and bright type (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LFvz5TGw0_0&index=6&list=PLdA-dZtlMHMaeL-9XZyVnN7yvcW-ZxwRP).

Pamela Fleming states: "The detection occurred at 8:45 pm, using a pair of 70 mm Galileo and Santilli telescopes from the 4th floor of the Marriott Hotel, facing the Tax Collector building in Tallahassee, Florida. No anomalous entities were detected with the Galileo Telescope with conventional convex lenses, whereas the anomalous entities were fully visible in the screen of the digital camera attached to the Santilli telescope with concave lenses. I believe that these anomalous entities are a good candidate for Invisible Terrestrial Entities of the second kind because they emitted isodual light, which can only be focused with the Santilli Telescope with concave lens," (http://www.thunder-energies.com/index.php/ct-menu-item-18/11-articles/17-article-8).

Pamela Fleming adds: "The entities disappeared from view in the Santilli Telescope two hours after the initial detection, without any change in the public city lighting that was surrounding the Tax Collector building. Thunder Energies Corporation believes that this detection confirms the usefulness of the new surveillance of civilian, industrial and governmental facilities permitted by our pair of Galileo and Santilli Telescopes, since they can record all possible anomalies not visible with conventional binoculars or telescopes," (http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B01CNW8E5K/ref=olp_product_details?ie=UTF8&me=).



About Thunder Energies Corp:

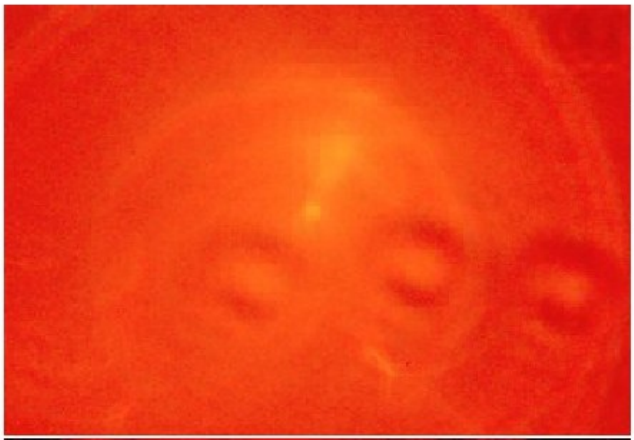
Thunder Energies Corporation is a breakthrough technology company featuring three cutting edge technologies in the fields of optics, nuclear physics and fuel combustion. Thunder Energies is led by Dr. Ruggero Santilli, CEO and Chief Science Officer. Dr. Santilli is a former faculty at MIT, Harvard and other leading institutions around the world. For details, please visit Dr. Santilli's CV.

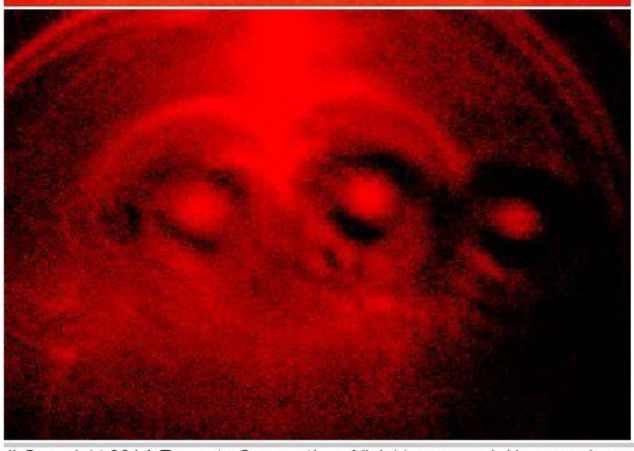
Forward Looking Statements:

Certain statements in this news release may contain forward-looking information within the meaning of Rule 175 under the Securities Act of 1933 and Rule 3b-6 under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, and are subject to the safe harbor created by those rules. All statements, other than statements of fact, included in this release, including, without limitation, statements regarding potential future plans and objectives of the company, are forward-looking statements that involve risks and uncertainties. There can be no assurance that such statements will prove to be accurate and actual results and future events could differ materially from those anticipated in such statements. Technical complications, which may arise, could prevent the prompt implementation of any strategically significant plan(s) outlined above. The Company undertakes no duty to revise or update any forward-looking statements to reflect events or circumstances after the date of this release.

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SOURCE: Thunder Energies Corp

- Ruggero Santilli
- Pamela Fleming

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Prankster changes western NY road sign to read 'I Love You'

August 3, 2016 yahoo.com

AP Assoc Press BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) — A prankster's changes to the message on an electronic roadside sign in Buffalo may be causing motorists to smile, but New York State Police aren't amused.

WIVB-TV reports (http://bit.ly/2aSJoWY) someone accessed the keyboard on a sign along Route 198 in Delaware Park on Monday and changed the message to read: "It's All A Dream."

The same sign Tuesday flashed "I Love You" before crews shut it down.

The government-agencies coalition responsible for the sign's traffic messages says it operates them on behalf of a contractor for the state Department of Transportation. The department says it is the contractor's responsibility to make sure the sign's keyboard panel is fully locked.

State police say tampering with road signs is illegal and poses a potentially dangerous distraction for drivers.

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Information from: WIVB-TV, http://www.wivb.com

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Man shocked by thousands in fees added to his pre-paid burial plan

aol.com

Jun 21st 2016 11:50AM

Bob Lockler finally covered the cost of his burial plan last August after 12 years of payments. Only now he's facing more bills.

"He went on to tell me it was going to cost me about another $3,000 to pay for everything," Lockler told KSHB.

KSHB reports the Kansas City, Missouri, resident got another bill in October. Lockler says he's been duped by hidden fees. Among the fees in that second wave was the internment fee –– the cost of digging the grave and lowering the casket, which seems pretty counterintuitive to not have as part of the original burial plan.

But the president of Lockler's funeral home told KSHB these fees weren't included because they are future services.

"A future service, by law, would have to be funded in some sort of side arrangement," the president told KSHB.

Taxes also can't legally be included in the original plan if the service hasn't been carried out. For instance, Lockler's casket has yet to be made, so the tax has to go through a side fund.

"I didn't know that there were any additional charges," Lockler told KSHB.

The funeral home says information on the side fees was in the fine print of the original contract. The president told KSHB the funeral home discusses these side costs with all clients, but he couldn't say for certain Lockler was told because his deal was made 12 years ago.

Lockler's funeral home has since dropped his side costs to roughly $600.

The video above includes clips from KSHB.

Aol. AOL

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New Zealand aims to become predator-free by 2050 - BBC News

bbc.com

BBC By News from Elsewhere... ...as found by BBC Monitoring

- 25 July 2016

New Zealand has set a goal of eradicating all non-native predators within 35 years in order to protect the country's indigenous wildlife.

The clock is ticking for stoats, rats and possums, as Prime Minister John Key wants "every single part" of New Zealand to be free of the creatures by 2050, the New Zealand Herald reports. Mr Key says the animals kill 25 million native birds each year, and getting rid of them will be "the most ambitious conservation project attempted anywhere in the world".

Feral cats are also in the government's sights, but pets - including Mr Key's own moggy, Moonbeam - aren't at risk. Last week, a new housing development in Wellington hit the headlines for its pet cat ban, aimed at protecting wildlife at a nearby nature reserve.

The government is set to invest NZ$28m (US$19.5m; £15m) in a new company, Predator Free New Zealand Ltd, and wants the private sector to provide financial support. The opposition Green Party has pointed out that one university study found achieving such an aim would cost closer to NZ$9bn (US$6.3bn; £4.8bn).

While poison will play a part in some areas, ministers are also banking on technological advances, Radio New Zealand reports. Conservation Minister Maggie Barry says the project will need technology that doesn't yet exist in order to meet its aims, as predator-proof fences won't be suitable for a national solution.

It's not just furry predators that are worrying the authorities. A two-year ban on pea farming is being imposed across the North Island's Wairarapa region, after invasive pea weevils were discovered in seeds. Officials say the ban will cut off the food source for weevil larvae, which feed on growing pea pods, in order to get rid of the insects before they can become established in New Zealand.

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Dude tries to impress girlfriend by pretending to be police chief, gets caught by his 'staff'

shanghaiist.com



fake-police-chief.jpg

Trying to impress his girlfriend, a man in Chongqing pretended to be the local police chief and took his sweetheart to the police station for a visit, thinking that the police would never be able to see through his carefully crafted lie. He was wrong.

Last week, his girlfriend's family had begun to doubt his status as their police chief, so to prove his identity, he decided to let her tag along on a visit to his "office," Chongqing Evening News reports. Before the policeman on duty had a chance to ask who he was, the man said, "Brother, you don't know your new police chief? Must be because I was only transferred here last week. I've been training elsewhere, and haven't met everyone here yet." He then asked the policeman to bring his guest a cup of water, and declared that there will be a meeting that night during which he will introduce himself to everyone.

The policeman he talked to thought this was a bit odd, so he asked his group leader about this change in leadership, who assured him that there was none. Realizing that there was a fraud in their midst, he detained the "police chief." The imposter quickly admitted to his crime, and shared his story in an interrogation.

He said that he had met his girlfriend online, and found out that she has a great admiration for policemen. He bought fake uniforms and badges online, hoping that he could fool her into marrying him. However, her family saw through the fake uniforms, so he tried to prove his identity by taking his girlfriend to the police station and acting like the police chief.

Further police investigation revealed that he actually had five girlfriends at the same time.

In the past, he had committed more serious crimes of fraud, such as convincing five women from different places in China to give him a total of 30,000 RMB under the pretense that he or his parents were ill.

Still, his schemes are neither as cunning nor as daring as that of these four Heilongjiang con artists who built a fake interrogation center to extort cash from corrupt officials.

By Amy Yang

Contact the author of this article or email tips@shanghaiist.com with further questions, comments or tips.
By Shanghaiist in News on Jul 13, 2016 12:15 PM
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Rometta, comunione negata a un bimbo autistico. Il prete smentisce
2016/06/12 15:00:00 messina.gds.it

http://messina.gds.it/2016/06/12/rometta-comunione-negata-a-un-bimbo-autistico_525041/

GIORNALE DI SICILIA
MYSELF


autistic child, first communion, rometta tide, Messina, Chronicle

Rometta, denied communion to an autistic child. The priest denies

ofEmilio PintaldiJune 12, 2016
The priest would tell the mother, Mrs. Maria Rosa, who for the second time he tried to go to his son the way first communion, that the child was not able to understand

ROMETTA TIDE. Nothing first communion to a child of ten autistic and bursts the controversy. Yet another controversy around the parish of Sant 'Antonio di Rometta Marea guided by' septuagenarian father Nino Knowles. To be the priest who, at the rectory, had hung three years ago the photo of Totò Cuffaro, I 'former president of the region ended in prison for aiding and abetting the Mafia and detection of d' secrecy.

This time, at the center of a controversy over the company, refusing to make the first communion from Father Knowles against a ten-year-old autistic child. The priest would tell the mother, Mrs. Maria Rosa, who for the second time he tried to go to his son the way first communion, that the child was not able to understand. For the first communion was necessary to wait until the child could understand more. He was ready to understand the meaning that 'ostia and that sacrament. But the child suffering from birth from a severe form of autism does not speak or rather expresses a few words and is confined to a wheelchair. "My child- explains on the phone in tears Mrs. Maria Rosa - can not achieve improvements over time. Only a miracle could make him like all the other kids. "

And perhaps because in this Article aims Mrs. Maria Rosa, believer and Catholic, in his heart, he believes, the family, grandmother in the head, had decided to make their first communion to the child, to make him short, "the grace of of". But by Don Knowles no permit. And so the question, with the outburst of the mother and father ended up on Facebook, with a lot of comments from friends and romettesi. So far the story of the mother. The version of Don skiing ball is far from 'other: "But should just end it on this story newspapers? - Says the priest who responds in a friendly and helpful- face come the mother- suggests the 'elder parroco- and we will find a solution. The question then is not just like telling relatives. I simply asked that the child was in a position to communicate at least with myself maybe with the 'help of his mother or a helper. "

What that weeks ago, Don Knowles, was finished in the newspapers and on the company for 'another controversy with the' Municipal Administration. The school children who had to make a recitation in the lounge of 'oratory were at the center of a tug of war between Don Knowles and the City. The pastor would leave the kids for a couple of hours out of the 'oratory waiting for the municipality to sign an insurance release. Release that, according to the 'administration, was not necessary as the relations between the church and the administration are regulated by time from a convention. "No one clash with the 'administration - is quick to say Don Knowles - for me the parishioners are all the same." And compared to the history of Cuffaro added: "You still on that? It's water under the bridge. Among the 'other' s former governor has expiated his sentence. Not rinvangate useless stories. "

Comment article

- 11

01
foot 12/06/2016 - 15:40:14
Dear priest is not only the autistic child who does not understand. The cominione unfortunately oggo is just one of the many social events to celebrate more appearance than the other so maybe this baby communion would be the truest perhaps come true a true miracle. small force.

- 6

12
VINCENZO 12/06/2016 - 21:53:20
Meanwhile, we must see if it is true, then I think like you.Anyway communion for those who believe there is a source of healing ....

- 6

23
Tio Pepe 12/06/2016 - 17:31:59
But the priests do not retire?

- 8

34
Goodbye 12/06/2016 - 20:53:35
Dear Pope, Make him 'na phone!

- 10

45
roberto 06/12/2016 - 22:30:59
I would like to say to this priest, but because newborn babies who are baptized understand the meaning of the sacrament ??? ..

- 2

56
Security 13.06.2016 - 00:12:19
But to finish .... still behind the priests go !!!!

- 1

67
Renato C. 06.13.2016 - 09:40:45
This priest did not understand anything of autism.Maybe you should write a letter to Pope Francis.from the Middle Ages stuff !!Quiet Mom, you'll win your battle.Hang in there and not give up.

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Priest performs exorcism on child caught up in portal to Hell

By Foti Kallergis
GARY, IN (KTRK) --

abc13.com

ABC13



Priest describes exorcism of child

The child's family lived in a home with what's been called a 'portal to Hell' (KTRK)

Friday, October 31, 2014

Whether you're a believer or not, religious experts say exorcisms are happening more and more.

Pope Francis often speaks about the devil in his morning homilies, and he did so again today ahead of the All Saints Day and All Souls Day.

"This generation, and many others, have been led to believe that the devil is a myth, a figure, an idea, the idea of evil. But the devil exists and we must fight against him," the Pope told faithful gathered for Mass at St. Martha's guesthouse where he resides.

This year, the Vatican dedicated a group of 250 priests from around the world to perform the ancient rite of casting out demons. The Vatican's chief exorcist told a Vatican newspaper that he has cast out as many as 70,000 demons.

Catholics describe exorcism as the eternal battle between good and evil and a fight for souls on earth. To them, it is a spiritual war where demons possess the living, giving them dark powers.

"Demons are fallen angels, evil spirits," said Sister Madeline Grace. "The devil is using their physical powers in ways they never had before."

Exorcism is a topic that many Catholic priests will not talk about, but one in Gary, Indiana, spoke to Eyewitness News.

Priest Mike Maginot is at the center of one of the most documented cases of demon possession and exorcism in recent history.

In April 2012, Maginot got a frantic call about a 9-year-old boy. His two siblings and his mother were tormented by demon spirits coming from their basement.

"This was different. It all started when they moved into that house," Maginot said.

He says behind the stairs was a portal to Hell.

"Occasionally they would hear growling. They were waking up with bloody noses. All of a sudden one of the boys got thrown into the freezer," said Maginot.

Indiana's Department of Child Services eventually removed the kids from the home, but the

problems followed.

"Usually the devil doesn't show off before professional people," Maginot said.

But he said this time the devil did. Indiana records from the Department of Child Services, state that during an observation in the presence of a doctor, a case worker, and a psychologist, one of the children walked up the wall and did a flip over his grandmother.

In another instance in the doctor's office, the boy was lifted and thrown into the wall, while records say nobody touched him.

The boy's mother, Latoya Ammons, faced her own demons, and Maginot and his parish bishop decided it was time for the exorcism of Ammons.

"I decided to test her with my crucifix," Maginot said. "Every time I put the crucifix on her she would convulse, but it would be a steady convulsion."

Police and other witnesses or therefore it all, sitting in the pews. Maginot said he recited praises of God followed by condemning the devil.

"She got more and more violent," said Maginot.

Maginot said he called the Demon out by name in the third exorcism ceremony performed in his church.

"Once you get the name you pretty much have it. It's like, caught. You have the spotlight on it, there's nowhere to run. It's trapped," said Maginot.

Finally, after hours and hours, a release.

"When it was gone from Latoya, it was gone from the kids," said Maginot.

Ammons eventually got her children back, and they never returned to that home. Father Maginot says still today there is a portal to Hell.

"There is a danger. Because I did have to in fact perform an exorcism on someone that went in there. It will become one of the most notorious sites in America."

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Alleged paedophile priest warned victim he'd 'go to hell'

01/06 thelocal.it

http://www.thelocal.it/20160615/alleged-paedophile-italian-priest-told-victim-he-would-go-to-hell

The Local



Alleged paedophile priest warned victim he'd 'go to hell'

Alleged paedophile priest warned victim he'd 'go to hell'

The Local/AFP · 15 Jun 2016, 12:24

Published: 15 Jun 2016 12:24 GMT+02:00

An Italian priest, arrested on Tuesday on suspicion of sexually abusing a minor, allegedly told his victim that he would go to hell if he spoke out about the abuse.

The 55-year-old, from Corna di Darfo parish near the Lombardy city of Brescia, allegedly abused the boy, of foreign origin, from when he was aged 12 until he reached 14.

The priest, who has been suspended from the parish, is alleged to have said to the child that if he told anyone about the abuse then he would go to hell.

The boy, who attended the parish in order to be baptized, eventually confided in a priest in Milan, who told him to tell police.

Some 850 priests have been defrocked for child abuse over the last decade, but according to research conducted earlier this year by L'Abuso, an Italian association for the victims of paedophilia by priests, many have not been brought to justice.

In May, an Italian priest awaiting a criminal trial for sex abuse of minors, due to begin this month, agreed to pay €125,000 in compensation to the families of five of his alleged victims.

Mauro Inzoli, 66, was defrocked in 2012 after he was first accused of paedophilia but that decision was reversed in 2014, when Pope Francis ordered him to stay away from minors and retire to "a life of prayer and humble discretion."

An outcry over Inzoli's treatment led to criminal proceedings being initiated against him in the northern Italian town of Cremona but the Church has reportedly refused to hand over details of its

own investigation.

Inzoli, dubbed "Don Mercedes" by the press for his penchant for luxury cars, will be tried for abusing minors aged between 10 and 16 years between 2004 and 2008. He faces up to 12 years in prison.

The perceived leniency of his treatment has angered critics who say the Church is still too reticent about handing paedophile priests over to the criminal authorities.

In March, the Vatican admitted there was "still much to be done" to combat clerical paedophilia in many countries.

The Local/AFP (news@thelocal.it)

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FL man, 59, accused of punching swan in front of off-duty officers

wfla.com

http://wfla.com/2016/06/27/fl-man-59-accused-of-punching-swan-in-front-of-off-duty-officers/?utm_source=fark&utm_medium=website&utm_content=link

WFLA

WESH Published: June 27, 2016, 11:58 am Updated: June 27, 2016, 5:46 pm



swanpunchmug

ORLANDO, FL (WESH) —A 59-year-old man was arrested at Lake Eola after police said he punched a swan over the weekend.

According to Orlando police, two off-duty officers were walking through the park and stopped to watch a swan and her babies around 7 p.m. Sunday.

Then, a man later identified as Sor Angel Velez walked between the off-duty officers and the swan.

According to a police report, the swan reached out toward Velez as if it were defending its babies. The officers said they saw Velez walk about 10 feet farther, then turn around and walk back toward the swan before punching the bird.

Police said the man began to run but he was caught by the two off-duty officers, who then called police to report the incident.

Velez was arrested on suspicion of injuring wildlife on public property. He pleaded no contest and was sentenced to 10 days in jail.

WFLA.com

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Surprise! Newfound Asteroid Is 'Quasi-Moon' of Earth

By Mike Wall, Space.com Senior Writer | June 16, 2016 07:00am ET

space.com

It seems the moon is not Earth's only cosmic companion.

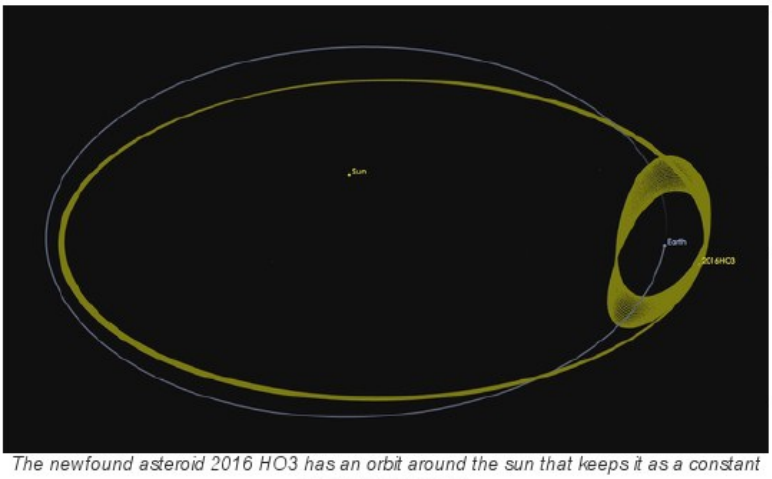
The newly discovered asteroid 2016 HO3 orbits the sun in such a way that the space rock never strays too far from Earth, making it a "quasi-satellite" of our planet, scientists say.

"One other asteroid — 2003 YN107 — followed a similar orbital pattern for a while over 10 years ago, but it has since departed our vicinity," Paul Chodas, manager of NASA's Center for Near-Earth Object Studies at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California, said in a statement Wednesday (June 15).

"This new asteroid is much more locked onto us," Chodas added. "Our calculations indicate 2016 HO3 has been a stable quasi-satellite of Earth for almost a century, and it will continue to follow this pattern as Earth's companion for centuries to come."

Indeed, 2016 HO3 is the best example of an Earth quasi-satellite ever found, scientists said.

The asteroid was discovered on April 27 by scientists using the Pan-STARRS 1 survey telescope in Hawaii. 2016 HO3's exact size is unknown, but researchers think it's between 130 feet and 330 feet wide (40 to 100 meters).



The newfound asteroid 2016 HO3 has an orbit around the sun that keeps it as a constant companion of Earth.

The newfound asteroid 2016 HO3 has an orbit around the sun that keeps it as a constant companion of Earth.
Credit: NASA/JPL-Caltech

As the space rock circles the sun, it loops around Earth as well, zooming ahead of the planet half of the time and trailing behind the other half, NASA officials said. 2016 HO3's orbit is tilted slightly relative to that of Earth, so the asteroid also bobs up and down through our planet's orbital plane.

The path of 2016 HO3 tends to twist and drift over time, but Earth's gravitational pull keeps the asteroid contained: It never comes closer than 9 million miles (14.5 million kilometers) to our planet, and it never gets more than 24 million miles (38.6 million km) away, researchers said.

"In effect, this small asteroid is caught in a little dance with Earth," Chodas said.

This dance is not dangerous: 2016 HO3 poses no threat to the planet, NASA officials said.

Follow Mike Wall on Twitter @michaeldwall and Google+. Follow us @Spacedotcom, Facebook or Google+. Originally published on Space.com.

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Rainbow Was A Powerful Symbol In People's Ancient Beliefs | MessageToEagle.com

messagetoeagle.com



MessageToEagle.com



Rainbow Was A Powerful Symbol In People's Ancient Beliefs

June 09, 2016

MessageToEagle.com – Rainbow has a special place in people's ancient beliefs.

The people of the Bogota plain once appealed to the sun god **Bochica** to protect them, when furious over their complaints and disobedience, Chibchachum, god of labors and business, sent a great flood to wipe out the region.



The sacred lagoon of Guatavita – Cundinamarca – Colombia. Credits: Traveldudes

Bochica appeared sitting on a rainbow and brought out the sun to evaporate the waters and using his gold staff he created a chasm in the mountains through, which most of the flood flowed away. The magnificent waterfalls Bochica created, still exists, spilling into the sacred Lake Guatavita.

The rainbow became a symbol of rescue from flood for the Chibcha people and afterwards, they always worshiped the rainbow as the goddess Chuchaviva.

Chronicler Sarmiento de Gamboa collected oral accounts first hand from Inca informants; the stories formed his great work, ''*The History of the Incas'* which contains extremely detailed descriptions of Inca history and mythology.

Sarmiento writes in his book that the Inca rulers worshiped Huanacauri, a mountain southeast of Cuzco, apparently the most prominent huaca in Inca culture. One day, a rainbow appeared on the mountain, signifying that the fortunate rise of the Inca Empire would begin at this precise location, which later became Cuzco.

According to Inca mythology, it happened in times of Manco Capac, the mythical founder of the Inca Empire, who considered the rainbow, a fortunate sign:



The Coricancha or "Golden Enclosure" was the most sacred and important temple in the town of Cusco for the Inca Empire.

"Take this for a sign that the world will not be destroyed by water. We shall arrive and from hence we shall select where we shall found our city," Manco Capac said.

To the Inca, Cuycha (or in Quechua, the Inca language: Coichi, Cuichu) was a sacred rainbow but could also mean halo, and other forms of glowing phenomena, the Inca frequently observed in the sky.

This rainbow god was worshiped along with the other major deities in the Inca's religious Coricancha compound. Cuycha had his own temple, one with a golden arc painted with the seven colors of the rainbow.



The banner of the Inca (and of the Tawantinsuyu - four regions of the Inca Empire)

rainbowgodbanner14

Cuycha was an important deity, which appeared often in the Peruvian sky during the long rainy season and these people were always dependent on rain for growing crops.

The Inca developed many beliefs about the colorful Cuycha god who roamed across the heavens. They determined the sex of each glow by observing its main color. Blue rainbows were male and red were female.

Rainbows in Incan belief, were serpents with two heads who rose out of springs, arched into the sky, and buried themselves either in another spring or somewhere inside the earth. Rainbows moved and because the ancients worshiped rainbows, they believed that they moved deliberately and often for malevolent reasons, causing many troubles, for instance, steal from men and enter women and cause stomach pains.

If a rainbow did enter a person and that person got sick, however, there was a cure.

The Inca believed the sick person would get well if he unraveled a ball of yarn made of the seven colors of Cuycha, the rainbow.

Rainbows are considered a sign of good luck, and many people make a wish when they see one. As Biblical Noah saw a rainbow near the end of his time on the ark; similar to Chibcha people, we mentioned earlier, some people believe it is a sign that God will never flood the entire world again.

Early Christian legends say that the rainbow is actually the archangel Uriel, who looks after thunder, lightning and storms.; some Amazon tribes believe that the rainbow takes the energy from water up to the clouds and to bathe in such water is to suffer a deadly loss of vital force.

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"Rapist vampire fetishist" forced victim to drink his blood from cross carved in his chest

sundayworld.com

Saturday 16th July 2016

A 28-year-old 'vampire fetishist' carved a cross into his chest and forced a woman to drink his blood, a jury in the UK was told.

The theatrical prop maker then allegedly sliced the woman's inner thigh with a razor blade and sucked her blood.

The alleged victim, one of two women he is accused of raping, told cops he held her head to his chest wound.

28-year-old Luke McCarthy is also said to have drained blood into vodka to keep it fresh and forced her to drink that too.

McCarthy allegedly raped a second woman three years later after meeting her at a 'gothic industrial fetish club'.

Prosecutor David Harounoff told the court that the first woman was forced to sleep on McCarthy's floor with her head in a cage after being punched by him and told that she was "sort of attractive" to him.

"He has this vampire fetish - he cut his chest in the shape of a cross and blood came out," the woman told police in an interview.

"He got the back of my head and made me suck it out - I had no choice, I had to suck the blood."

McCarthy allegedly cut the woman's leg and sucked up her blood from the wound.

"'He was sucking it up because he was biting on the sides - really really sucking, it was painful."

McCarthy told police following his arrest she was a consenting partner who was up for kinky sex.

He insisted in an interview: "It was just how we were sexually. She did want to experiment."

The alleged rapist was also quizzed about wanting her to act as his slave.

He told officers: "Unless you are naturally submissive in certain ways, then you can't have someone be dominant to you because you can't get anything out of it.

"I basically said it might give her more to focus on."

The court heard that McCarthy had the ability to "charm any person to make him look like the most wonderful person on earth".

"He switches completely from being this terrifying person to being a really nice guy," the alleged victim told police.

The alleged victim repeatedly asked McCarthy to stop and he simply replied 'master' to indicate how

he felt she should address him, jurors heard.

McCarthy allegedly threatened the woman's family, telling her: “I know where your sister is.

“If you tell anyone the same thing will happen to her but a lot worse.”

McCarthy pleads not guilty to four counts of rape between 2009 and 2013. His second alleged victim was a woman who spent three years as his girlfriend.

She was in her mid-20s when she started going out with him.

SundayWorldAn INM website

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UK rapist with vampire fetish forces victim to suck blood from wound on his chest

deccanchronicle.com

DECCAN CHRONICLE.
Published Jul 16, 2016, 3:28 pm IST
Updated Jul 16, 2016, 4:30 pm IST

'He was sucking it up because he was biting on the sides - really really sucking, it was painful,' the victim said recalling the terror.



McCarthy has been accused of raping two women, one of who was forced to suck blood from his chest. (Photo: Facebook)

Vauxhall, **London**: A man with a vampire fetish has been accused of carving a cross mark on his chest before forcing a woman to suck blood from the wound.

The incident took place in Vauxhall, a district in southwest London.

A case has been registered against the accused, Luke McCarthy, in connection with the crime and the trial is being heard in the Southwark Crown Court.

McCarthy has been accused of raping two women, one of who was forced to suck blood from his chest.

The victim, in her statement to the police, said that she was forced to sleep on the floor with her head in a cage. Punching her in the face, McCarthy told her that she was "sort of attractive to him."

He then cut his chest in the shape of a cross and forced her to drink his blood. "I had no choice. I had to suck blood," the victim said.

It didn't stop at that. Later, it was the woman's turn to cut up her leg and McCarthy sucked her blood as a part of his fetish.

"He was sucking it up because he was biting on the sides - really really sucking, it was painful," the victim said recalling the pain she had to go through.

According to a report, McCarthy had also threatened to harm the victim's family if she did not obey his orders and call him 'master'.

Although the woman alleged rape, McCarthy said that the relationship was consensual and that the vampire fetish was 'symbolic' so that two people have a special connection. He has denied four counts of rape.

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Investigate A Haunted House With The Real Female Ghostbusters

By Ethan Harfenist and Adi Cohen
Jul 12, 2016 at 10:31 AM ET

vocativ.com

http://www.vocativ.com/336905/real-female-ghostbusters/

Five female paranormal investigators, a minivan full of ghost-hunting gear, and one haunted doll
By Jennings Brown



The FPI team brought a "haunted" doll with human hair on their hunt

As the Fay family prepares for a short weekend getaway, they load the minivan with an ice chest full of refreshments, a box of granola bars and chips, camcorders, a haunted doll, and eight aluminum briefcases filled with ghost-hunting equipment.

"Alright girls, here's the recon," Linda Fay says from behind the wheel, "We're going to the Saxon Manor in Brooksville. Frank Saxon was a Civil War hero and he built this house for his wife, Tululu Hope in 1877. People think he might still be there."

Linda is the matriarchal leader of Female Paranormal Investigators (FPI) a team of ghost hunters based in Tampa. Linda claims she's been able to see spirits ever since her deceased mother visited her at the age of eight. But she kept this ability a secret until seven years ago, when she finally came out as a clairvoyant. To Linda's surprise, the family embraced her sixth sense.

Her sister and daughters started joining her on ghost hunts. Eventually, paranormal investigation turned into a full-blown family hobby, as some of the other women realized they also sensed spirits. On a typical hunt, Linda is accompanied by her sister, Marilyn, and her twenty-something daughters, twins Kendal and Kelsey, and Kaitlyn, affectionately considered the skeptic of the group (the oldest sibling, Keegan, is currently away, getting a graduate degree in psychology). The family came up with a name, a uniform (purple and black), and a YouTube channel. The FPI team investigates the homes of people disturbed by mysterious sounds, appearances, or bodily harm, but sometimes they reserve entire evenings in empty buildings that have a reputation for being haunted. They've been looking forward to investigating the Saxon Manor for months.

"We're a close-knit family. We all love scary movies, we all love hanging out together, we love traveling," says Kaitlyn. "So it's the perfect hobby as a family."

The modern era of ghost hunting began with three sisters in 1848. The Fox sisters inadvertently conjured the Spiritualist movement when Maggie, 14, and Kate, 11, started communicating with dead people through a series of raps and knocks that seemed to emanate from the walls of their cottage, 35 miles outside of Rochester, New York. Their older sister, Leah, became the duo's manager, booking sold-out seance rooms and parlors from New York City to St. Louis. By the

1870s, several female mediums became national celebrities, perhaps realizing the trade was a rare means for a women to gain economic independence. Many prominent spiritualists eventually became suffragettes. In fact, Victoria Woodhull got her start as a spiritualist and Wall Street broker before she was the first female candidate for United States President.

In 1882, six years before the Fox sisters revealed that their entire act was a hoax, a journalist and a physicist founded the Society for Psychical Research (SPR), an British organization dedicated to studying paranormal activity using scientific methods. The club included renowned chemists, physicists, and a Nobel laureate, many of whom helped establish the model of the modern ghostbuster.

But during the heyday of Spiritualism, another form of sorcery was also mystifying western civilization. Between 1860 and 1890 the United States issued 500,000 invention patents. Technological wizards of the Gilded Age invented the phonograph, photography, electrical lighting, and the telephone. “The idea that you could pick up a device and listen to someone across the country and speak to them in real time was magic,” said Benjamin Radford, deputy editor of Skeptical Inquiry and a science-based paranormal investigator who is renowned (and detested) in the ghost-hunting community for debunking several hauntings. “At the time when there was a lot of credulity and public interest in ghosts and disembodied spirits, the telephone and radio waves and the telegraph were also coming into existence. To the general public, it was all mixed in. So, to many people, it was plausible that someone could invent a telephone to the dead.” (That group even included Thomas Edison, who spoke of trying to make a “spirit phone” to communicate with the dead.)

These inventions played prominent roles in both hoaxes and investigations and influenced how the world viewed ghosts. Spirit photographers would capture ghosts in photos (often with the aid of double exposure) and mediums would often “speak” to ghostly voices that were actually transmitted radio waves.

This may be why many of today’s ghost hunters view paranormal activity as a sort of energy that can be quantified through tech. One of the most popular methods of searching for ghosts is through the use of electromagnetic field (EMF) meters (which inspired the Psychokinetic Energy (PKE) meters in the “Ghostbusters” universe). “Ghosts have changed as technology changed,” Radford said. “Victorian-era ghosts were these unseen denizens of cold, dark, dank dungeons that clanked chains around in the dark. Now ghosts are a spike on a piece of gadgetry.”



As the FPI team pulls up to Saxon Manor in their minivan, they’ve brought only a fraction of the armory Linda has back home at her FPI lab, where she reviews footage captured on investigations, tests new tools, and makes her own gadgets. The shelves of this converted office are overloaded with gear, both technical and mystical—EMF readers, Ouija boards she’s modified with recorders and sensors, Tarot cards, thermal imaging cameras, crucifixes, night-vision goggles, motion-activated dolls, and lots of devil’s toy boxes—mirrored cubes meant to capture spirits.

Here at the Saxon Manor investigation, the FPI clan relies heavily on robots. As most the family surveys the interior of the house, Kaitlyn stays outside and tries to film apparitions in the upstairs

windows with the help of a quadcopter video drone. People can scare off these spirits, the team believes, but perhaps ghosts will be less timid around an unmanned aircraft.

Inside the house, the twins prepare ghost-baiting “spirit stations” and night-vision camcorders. They arrange one such station in front of a window where the groundskeeper told them he often sees a little blonde girl. To lure the child from hiding, they set up a ghost-hunting tool called BooBuddy—a teddy bear that asks questions and (according to the manufacturer) reacts to temperature and EMF changes by lighting up and saying phrases like “It’s cold in here” and “Do you want to play with me?” in a (often unsettling) childish voice.

In another upstairs room, the team places a different, far-less technical doll. Linda picked this one up at her last investigation, at an Opera House-turned-antique store in Arcadia, Florida. The century-old doll is made of wood and sports tresses made of real human hair. “[The store owner] had this haunted doll for five years and no one would buy it, she says. “I told him, ‘Oh, I’ll buy it.’ Maybe in a haunted location she’ll do something again.”

In between the doll’s legs, Linda places a REM pod, a device which screeches whenever it detects EMF. On the other end of the room, the team sets up a Kinect motion sensor. Originally developed by Microsoft for Xbox gameplay, the motion sensor capability of Kinect devices can be used in a variety of ways. FPI connects the Kinect to a laptop so that when someone steps in front of the motion sensor and blocks the thousands of projected lasers, their figure appears on the screen as a wire skeleton. They record the whole operation to catch any ghosts that might flit by.



Screen Shot 2016 07 11 at 6.50.04 PM

FPI footage of the Kinect-connected laptop

Finally, they attach another camera to a remote-control car on the second floor, so that they can drive it around and possibly capture something that might not come out in their presence.

All the camera feeds are all connected to a TV monitor downstairs, where they have set up FPI central command.

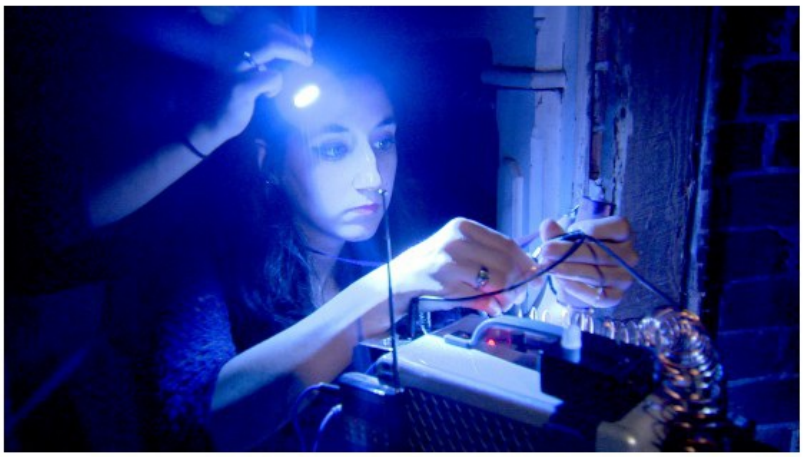
FPI is just one of thousands of paranormal investigation teams that have formed since reality shows like “Ghost Hunters” on the Syfy channel and “Ghost Adventures” on the Travel Channel popularized the hobby about a decade ago. “Most of these people don’t have a science background, but these TV shows gave them a template on how to act and what to do. The whole ‘everyman’ idea that a couple of plumbers can go out and try to prove life after death opened a door to the average person,” said Sharon Hill, a geologist who researches paranormal and pseudoscience culture. “I get angry when these groups say what they’re doing is science, because it gives the general public, especially kids, a really wrong impression of how to do science.”

In 2010, Hill studied 1,000 websites for paranormal investigation teams and found that while most of them use a lot of scientific jargon, hardly any of them apply scientific methods. “There isn’t any academic umbrella that’s shielding them, so they can just go into people’s houses and wing it and whatever works for them is what they use,” she said. “I worked hard for six years to gain a Bachelors and Masters degree in science. I don’t take kindly to people who think they can just grab gadgets and pretend to be a scientist.”



FPI admits they’ve taken inspiration from reality shows, but they’re more enthusiastic about the “Ghostbusters” reboot. “We’re really happy they came out with a female ‘Ghostbusters,’ because we think it will shed light on female paranormal investigators,” Linda says. “This is a predominately male industry, as far as investigators… We’ve investigated with several males and they don’t think we can handle it. And that’s fine. It doesn’t bother me one iota because I know what we can do. They might be a little jealous because we have all the equipment.”

Throughout the evening they use dozens of pieces of equipment to try to engage with spirits. The goal is not to trap or remove ghosts—FPI just wants to uncover proof of their presence and get to know more about them. The team tries to lure spirits out with trigger objects that might appeal to one of the ghostly inhabitants—a Confederate coin, a bullet from the Civil War, cigarettes, a vintage pocket watch, toys. Once they set out the bait, they use various devices to try to solicit a response. “You never know on an investigation which gadget spirits are going to communicate with,” Linda says. “One investigation may be the Ovilus, the next investigation it might be the Spirit Box. We continuously bring out equipment to solicit responses and we see which one is the most successful for that evening.”



ghostbusters_girl_wiring_equipment

Kendal Fay sets up a homemade Spirit Box that scans radio waves for spirit voices

For this investigation, the Spirit Box doesn't help. This handheld tool sweeps through every radio frequency (much like if you could quickly rotate a radio dial cycling through every station over and over again) searching for ghostly voices in the white noise. These voices often sound like blips snatched from DJs, commercials, and songs, but sometimes, the words line up to form a phrase or a sentence, which can sound like a ghost struggling to communicate with the world of the living, especially if that's what you're after.

After minutes of voiceless white noise, the team moves on to the Ovilus, developed by robotic engineer-turned-paranormal detection developer Bill Chappell. Chappell hit it big when his creations were featured on "Ghost Adventures" and over the last decade, Chappell's company Digital Dowsing has sold dozens of different machines, like a digital devil's toy box and aGod Helmet that gives wearers the sensation of being watched. But Chappell's most popular machine is the Ovilus, which responds to EMF triggers by reading out selected words from a limited, pre-programmed dictionary. As Linda holds up the Ovilus and asks questions of the spirits in the room, the device responds sporadically, "MORGUE… DOOR… SUICIDE…MAIN ROOM….MARY… CHAIR… TOUCH YOU…ELECTRIC…DIED… BY YOURSELF…DOLLS…EVIL."

The results can be eerily precise—like when the team is in a room alone with a supposedly haunted doll, but every word from this curated database also reads like it came from a horror story or a detective game.

And sometimes, the investigation does play out like a game. If something seems to work, if one of the multitude of gadgets says or does something that confirms a sensation or hunch, then the team will follow the trail.

The major breakthrough comes towards the end of the night with the help of technology that is already in millions of American homes. It's Kaitlyn, the skeptic, who catches it. She is standing in front of the laptop synched with the Kinect. The laptop shows the outline of Linda, who is sitting cross-legged a few feet from the haunted doll. Linda tries to lure out the little girl with several toys and a music box playing Beethoven's "Für Elise."

"Do you want to play a game?" Linda says into the darkness.



Then it suddenly appears on the screen right in front of Linda's green avatar—another green skeleton, a mysterious figure that seems to be four feet tall. But in the actual room, there is no one standing in front of Linda.

"Now mom, you're the only one that's been moving for a while on this thing, but there's something that's, like, as tall as you are sitting, in front of you, and it's not

Kendal." Linda keeps her calm and asks the presence to touch its head. On the screen, a faint line extends up from the side of the figure, as if following Linda's directions.

Now the team can pack up and head back to FPI headquarters. They've found their ghost.

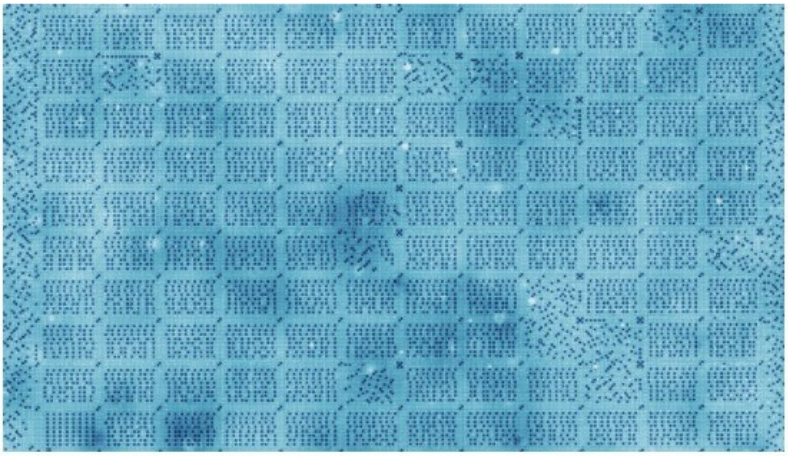
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Record-Setting Hard Drive Writes Information One Atom At a Time

George Dvorsky

gizmodo.com

http://gizmodo.com/record-setting-hard-drive-writes-information-one-atom-a-1783740015



An excerpt from Charles Darwin's On the Origin of Species—atom by atom. (Image: Sander Otte et al., 2016/Nature Nanoscience)

Researchers working in the Netherlands have developed an atomic-scale rewritable data-storage device capable of packing 500 terabits onto a single square inch. Incredibly, that's enough to store every book written by humans on a surface the size of a postage stamp. *Holy shit*.

It is as if we have invented the atomic scale printing press.

This atomic hard drive, developed by Sander Otte and his colleagues at Delft University, features a storage density that's 500 times larger than state-of-the-art hard disk drives. At 500 terabits per square inch, it has the potential to store the entire contents of the US Library of Congress in a 0.1-mm wide cube. The new system, described in the latest issue of *Nature Nanotechnology*, still requires considerable work before it's ready for prime time, but it's an important proof-of-principle that lays the groundwork for the development of useable atomic-scale data storage devices.

This isn't the first time scientists have positioned individual atoms at will. Researchers have been moving atoms using scanning tunneling microscopes since the early 1990s, but current methods are tedious and show, requiring tremendous patience and persistence. The new system, while still a bit slow, is a huge improvement in user friendliness.

To make it work, Otte and team placed chlorine atoms on a copper surface, resulting in a perfect square grid. Importantly, a hole appears on this grid whenever an atom is missing. As we all know, this type of on/off type configuration lends itself well to binary switching—the foundation of digital data storage. Using the sharp needle of a scanning tunneling microscope, the researchers were able to probe the atoms one by one, and even drag individual atoms towards a hole.

"The combination of chlorine atoms and supporting copper crystal surface that we found now, combined with the fact that we manipulate 'holes'—just as in a sliding puzzle—makes for a much more reliable, reproducible and scalable manipulation technique that can easily be automated," explained Otte to Gizmodo. "It is as if we have invented the atomic scale printing press."

The comparison to a sliding puzzle is apt. Every bit consists of two positions on a surface of copper atoms, and one chlorine atom that can be adjusted back and forth between these two positions. When a chlorine atom is in the top position, and there's a hole beneath it, it's a 1. Reversed, the bit is a 0. Voila, instant hard drive.

Each chlorine atom is surrounded by other chlorine atoms, which helps keep them in place, except near the holes. This method makes it much more stable than methods that use loose atoms. Using this technique, the researchers were able to perform write, read-out, and re-write operations in a one-kilobyte device comprising 8,000 atomic bits. It is by far the largest atomic structure ever constructed by humans.

The researchers organized memory into blocks of 8 bytes (64 bits). Each of these blocks was assigned a marker, constructed from the same types of "holes" as the raster of chlorine atoms. Similar to QR codes, these markers function like miniature barcodes that carry information about the precise location of their block on the copper layer. These markers can also indicate when a block is damaged, say on account of a local contaminant or an error on the surface. This means that memory can be easily scaled up to a big size, even if there are physical deficiencies in the copper surface.

An excerpt from Richard Feynman's lecture, "There's Plenty of Room at the Bottom." (Image: Sander Otte et al., 2016/Nature Nanoscience)

During the experiment, the researchers preserved the positions of more than 8,000 chlorine "vacancies," or missing atoms, for more than 40 hours at 77 kelvin (more on this in just a bit). After developing a binary alphabet based on the positions of the holes, the researchers stored various texts, including physicist Richard Feynman's seminal lecture, "There's Plenty of Room at the Bottom," and Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*. This data was stored atom by atom, bit by bit, on the surface of the copper sheet. The ensuing write/re-write speed was relatively slow—on the scale of minutes—but the demonstration showed that it's possible to reliably write, store, and read data at the atomic scale.

"While the memory outperforms existing media by far in terms of capacity, it still stays far behind in terms of read/write speed," Otte told Gizmodo. "However, I foresee no physical boundaries that will prevent us from speeding up these processes to similar speeds that are currently seen in [hard disk drives]. It will be a technological challenge for sure, but in terms of physics it should work."

I cannot at this point foresee where this will lead, but I am convinced that it will be much more exciting than just data storage.

An important caveat, however, is that this system cannot function in an everyday environment. In its current form, the atomic hard drive can only operate in clean vacuum conditions and at liquid nitrogen temperatures, which is -346°F (-321°C). As Otte admits, "the actual storage of data on an atomic scale is still some way off," but "through this achievement we have certainly come a big step closer."

The fact that this system only works at liquid nitrogen temperatures may seem like a deal breaker, but Otte disagrees. Now that his team has found that this particular combination of chlorine and copper provides a balance in terms of stability and manipulability, a logical next step would be to look for similar but different atoms such as iodine or bromine, and see if that enhances stability and thereby operating temperature.

"But even if that would not work, it would not be inconceivable to have data storage solutions at nitrogen temperatures in larger data centers," Otte said. "Many MRI scanners in hospitals are kept at helium temperature permanently, so in that sense it is not as extreme as it may sound at first."

Otte also sees this as a general breakthrough in the field of nanotechnology, saying it's really just a demonstration of our new abilities to engineer the world on the smallest possible length scale. "I cannot at this point foresee where this will lead, but I am convinced that it will be much more exciting than just data storage," he said.

George Dvorsky

George is a contributing editor at Gizmodo and io9.

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Thawed Reindeer Corpse May Have Triggered Russian Anthrax Outbreak

popularmechanics.com

Scientists believe the bacteria lay dormant under the permafrost for decades.



GettySamantha French / EyeEm
By Avery Thompson
Jul 29, 2016

When reindeer started dying in Siberia, at first scientists blamed the heat. But there seems to be a more insidious cause: Anthrax.

This summer, Siberia is experiencing a bit of a heatwave, with temperatures soaring over 95 degrees Fahrenheit. This is causing some of the permafrost to melt, and many of the region's reindeer herders are feeling the heat, along with their herds. So when hundreds of reindeer started dying, at first people thought it was due to the temperature. But when some of the herders and their children started getting sick, scientists realized something else was going on.

After an investigation, scientists have determined that the culprit is anthrax, which hasn't been seen in the country since 1968. Scientists believe the source of the anthrax is an old reindeer carcass that was frozen during the last anthrax epidemic 75 years ago. The current heatwave thawed the carcass, allowing the dormant bacteria to spread.

So far, the resurrected plague has killed 1500 reindeer since Sunday, although thankfully no people have died yet. Currently, thirteen people have been hospitalized, including four children. The remaining people in the area are being evacuated and vaccinated, and surviving animals are being vaccinated as well.

The Russian government has imposed a quarantine of the area which is expected to last until September.

Source: CNN

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Kids taught vampires are fake but Bible is fact

June 27, 2016

theage.com.au

Connect religious instruction says vampires fake but Bible is fact



"There aren't any vampires in the Bible because the Bible is not a made-up book," according to a Connect religious instruction lesson.

"These books are about vampires", begins the Connect religious instruction lesson for seven to nine year old children, introducing the well-known *Twilight* series of vampire novels, well known for their blend of eroticism and horror.

Recommended for ages 13 and over, the series follows the trials of Bella Swan, who falls in love with the pale, but good-looking vampire, Edward Cullen. It tells of his struggle to resist the strong sexual desire aroused by the scent of Bella's blood, and his choice to protect her from a coven of evil vampires.

"Some of your older brothers and sisters, or even your parents, may have read these books," the lesson continues.

The Connect religious instruction program is produced by the Sydney Anglican group Youthworks, and is widely used in New South Wales and Queensland.

Advertisement

"Who can tell me what they think a vampire is?" the class is asked.

"In these made-up stories about vampires how do you think someone becomes a scary vampire?

"Accept responses. A vampire bites them and drinks their blood, the person dies and then the person comes to life again but this time they are not a person, they are a vampire".

The Christian fascination with the vampire myth relates to the inversion of the communion sacrament. The human immortality resulting from drinking the blood of Christ is contrasted with the immortality of drinking human blood and belonging to a fallen, demonic world.

Twilight's author Stephanie Meyer uses her Mormon faith to infuse the series with themes of sexual abstinence, evil, and immortality.

"There aren't any vampires in the Bible because the Bible is not a made-up book - it is a book containing facts", the Connect lesson continues.

"But there are some true stories in the Bible about people dying and then coming back to life again and we're going to look at one now."

Evidently, the point of the lesson is to emphasize the authority of the Bible. A fundamentalist adherence to the literal truth of scripture is a key element of Connect: "To understand that the Bible is God's word: that it is historically reliable and still relevant today."

The program emphasises the literal truth of familiar Bible stories such as Adam and Eve, and Noah's Ark. Connect refers to the story of Jesus turning water into wine as: "a true story ... Jesus really did this; it wasn't a magic trick."

The authors apparently have no scruples with using violent and age inappropriate material to generate interest

in the Bible.

Children are told they "will die" if they're selfish, and nine-year-olds were to roleplay a beheading in David and Goliath. Parents have been disturbed by lessons denigrating children by comparing them to dirty towels in need of cleansing.

The grisly material is particularly at odds with the protests of conservative religious groups about violent and pornographic material in video games and movies.

But the gravest concern is the contest for children's souls, which is the clear and explicit focus of the Youthworks Connect RI program.

Any doubt is expunged by Youthworks' own website, which says that "the discipleship of children, youth and families is at the heart of everything we do."

Making disciples "is why we exist", they say.

RI policy prohibits proselytising, defined as "soliciting a student for a decision to change their religious affiliation".

Windsor State School banned the Connect program for "soliciting children to develop a personal faith in God and Jesus and become a Christian or 'Kingdom Kid'."

The Connect program is crammed full of entreaties to join the Christian faith, to become a Christian "Kingdom kid", to "follow Jesus", "be friends with Jesus", and to have "faith in Jesus". Children are even encouraged to tell their friends about "why they want them to know Jesus".

Nicky Ross, CEO of Christian Religious Education Sunshine Coast, admits the Connect program proselytises.

"We are very aware statements made in the curriculum DO proselytise, but the Education Act is specific not to do this and to make sure we are only educating children about the Christian faith," he says.

Tellingly, Youthworks have obtained a legal opinion from Brisbane Barrister Stewart Webster, that the prohibition on proselytising applies only to attempting to change a person's religious denomination.

Youthworks have forwarded the legal opinion to Education Minister Kate Jones, suggesting that they intend to enforce their perceived legal right to proselytise to non-Christian children.

While reviews are conducted into religious instruction, the respective state governments of Queensland and New South Wales must decide whether to allow the continued use of proselytising and age-inappropriate instruction material.

Vampires seeking to claim the souls of innocents is a scary thought: frightening to parents and children alike.

Hugh Harris is a member of the Rationalist Society of Australia.

37 comments so far

- Jesus turned water into wine; Jim Beam turned corn into bourbon.

Commenter
Matt Taylor
Location
Brisbane
Date and time
June 27, 2016, 12:19PM

- ....and we at least have the proof that Jim Beam did this, and continues to do it!

  The tales of the skyfairy, vampires, the dead coming back to life, parting of the waters, walking on water etc do NOT rate being taught as fact in the school curriculum.

If they are studied at all, it should be as myth and legend, in the same way the legends and gods of the ancient Greeks and Romans are studied - as electives in senior school for those with the interest and inclination to do so.

Religion cannot be counted on a par with evolution or any other science, and the Bible is not particularly well-written and so does not count as literary studies.

That little children are being taught this material as fact and are encouraged to pass on this rubbish is appalling, especially when it is happening in State schools in our secular democracy.

Commenter
your imaginary friends are not mine
Date and time
June 27, 2016, 2:28PM

- The Church turns fiction into fact....

Commenter
The truth
Date and time
June 27, 2016, 4:25PM

- Religious devotees turned skinny history books into fat fictional books, and the more stuff they added on, the more people were expected to memorise and believe it all. The problem nowadays is to separate out the baby from the bathwater without getting a whole bunch of zealots too fired up.

Commenter
bg
Date and time
June 27, 2016, 6:17PM

- Yeah, I'd like to see Jim Beam or anyone else on this planet turn water into wine....not made up.....???.....and purple pigs fly too, don't they...honest! Somehow, the people who wrote the bible obviously didn't study physics back then....

Commenter
JT
Date and time
June 27, 2016, 6:23PM

- Your point being, Matt?

You can't disprove Jesus changed water into wine as much I can prove that Jim Beam used the process of fermentation to turn corn into Bourbon!

What process was used to change water into wine? The point being that Jesus had the power to do it but in reality he operated at higher level than to worry about mundane things such as turning water into wine. He wasn't interested in taking advantage of that power but demonstrated the ability that he did but will not misuse that power.

Science is all about observation and repeatable phenomena to prove a fact. Science still cannot, to this day, definitively prove evolution, it can not repeat the process and the same thing for others like the big bang theory. They are theories because no one can prove with a repeatable experiment to prove it. That is science's Achilles heel. Science MUST be able to prove it for science to taken seriously. If it can't prove it, then any theory or postulations given by any scientist is just a theory, not fact and there's lots of things that science still not cannot explain.

It can explain how the human physiology works but still can't explain how one's conscience is formed and it probably will never be able to. Some say it's the human soul. There must be some higher force to kick start the human soul or conscience. But at the end of the day...it's all about how we live our lives. Jesus' motto was to love. He didn't really care what rituals were followed, it means nothing. He didn't care what one did/didn't eat, or what day one went to "church" or how much we tithe or how often one prayed. He changed the rules of the Old Testament.

Commenter
V 4 Vendetta
Date and time
June 27, 2016, 7:38PM

• Hmm, but it was labor under goss who implemented mandatory teaching of QLD primary school children about the rainbow serpent- where does that leave labor when their policies are so contradictory ?

ha ha ha

I for one would like to see the evolution myth that is taught in state schools legally challenged for its impossible claims.

Oh well, thank goodness for private schools huh. I'd employ someone from a private school over someone from a state school any day- state school kids are taught to conform to a leftist ideological borg hive mind whilst private school kids are taught to break the shackles of the miserable cloying left and soar above them.

Commenter
Alex
Location
Finley
Date and time
June 27, 2016, 12:23PM

• What utter tosh. Conformity in the classroom is sought after in all educational settings, else the one teacher will risk losing control and damaging educational outcomes.

That said to suggest private schools, where adherence to the rules and ethos of the school is not only highly prized but near on demanded, are some sort of temples of free form learning is laughable.

Ask yourself this; when it comes to trumpeting Yr 12 results who talks about the triumph of the school vs the success of the individual? I'll give you a hint; it's the one with a product and a brand to sell as opposed to the one whose students are allocated.

I'm not suggesting adherence to the rules and ethos of a school (attitudes prevalent in both private and state schools) is a bad thing as such, just that your Left v Right characterisation is as tiresome as it is unfounded.

Commenter
wonk_arama
Date and time
June 27, 2016, 1:04PM

• It's legally challenged in the US constantly Alex (as well you know) and each time, when it comes down to evidence, those challenges are defeated.

No myth can withstand examination.

Commenter
Blurghel
Date and time
June 27, 2016, 1:05PM

- To qualify my earlier response; I was educated at a state school, a CofE private school and a Catholic College. The quality of the educational experience always came down to the same things; the knowledge and imagination of the teacher, and their ability to engage with the minds of their students.

  I was very fortunate to have some wonderful and memorable teachers in all three institutions. At the private schools I attended, just like the public schools the best teachers encouraged us but nobody 'soared' beyond any carefully managed boundaries.

Commenter
wonk_arama
Date and time
June 27, 2016, 1:18PM

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The Reno Gang

graveyardgirl.net

Oct 12, 2014 *by* Jennifer *in* Criminals and Gangs

It was the years after the Civil War when most of the nation suffered from unemployment and crime. Many outlaw gangs formed during this time, including a gang of brothers: Frank, John, Simeon, and William Reno. The brothers were from Rockford, a small community two miles north of Seymour, Indiana.

The boys, born between 1837 and 1848, grew up in a family that was strictly religious, and some believe this caused them to rebel. They started with a few burglaries and horse thefts, but later were blamed with arson after several businesses in the area were set on fire.

Eventually, the older boys found an easy way to make money when the Civil War began. They would sign up for military service, which was rewarded with a cash bounty at the time, and then desert. Later, they would show up in another area and do it all again.

In the 1860's the brothers, along with a few other men they had met, started their gang. At first, they focused on robbing post offices, but eventually their ring grew until they were terrorizing businesses and people across the Midwest.

On the night of October 6, 1866, John and Simeon, along with Frank Sparks, boarded an east bound train as it was leaving Seymour. Wearing masks, they held a gun to the messenger and stole $12,000. They pulled the bell rope to signal the engineer to stop the train, and jumped off when it slowed and disappeared in the dark. This was the first ever recorded train robbery.

The brothers continued their rein of terror, getting away with thousands and thousands of dollars, until they were caught a couple years later. Frank, William, and Simeon were hung to death by a group of vigilantes in the New Albany jail on December 12, 1868 and buried in the Seymour City Cemetery. John had his own stints in prison, but would eventually die in his home on January 31, 1895.



All the information above was complied from Legends of America, where you can read a more in depth, interesting version.

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Reporter who added some swagger to the D.B. Cooper legacy comes clean

2016-07-28 latimes.com



The man known as D.B. Cooper
Artist sketches of Dan Cooper, who became known as D.B. Cooper (FBI)

Just two weeks after the FBI finally shut down its active investigation of the 45-year-old D.B. Cooper skyjacking case, James Long has come forward to confess his role.

"I got the name wrong," the former reporter said this week, admitting to a cardinal sin in journalism. But he decided to no longer remain quiet while another reporter who died 15 years ago took the blame for turning hijacker Dan Cooper into D.B. Cooper.

Long can laugh about it today, and the other reporter died knowing he'd been credited for a scoop that night. The error didn't hinder the investigation, since neither D.B. nor Dan Cooper was likely the skyjacker's real name, authorities figured.

But let the record show that it surely wasn't D.B., Long says now. He retired in 2003 after a respected career as an investigative reporter for the Oregonian, but was working at the since-shuttered Oregon Journal in Portland, an evening paper, when the hijacking unfolded on Thanksgiving eve, 1971.



The hijacked Northwest Orient Airlines jetliner.
Associated Press

His deadline story, and a United Press International wire service story based on his report, were among the first to report a Northwest Orient Airlines 727 was hijacked by a man in a black suit and tie named D.B. Cooper.

He boarded at Portland and during the flight handed a ransom note to an attendant, and then showed her what appeared to be a bomb. The plane landed in Seattle where passengers got off and money and parachutes were brought aboard — meeting the hijacker's demands. Cooper, alone in the cabin, lowered the back stairs and parachuted out over southwest Washington state with $200,000 in cash and his bomb.

About $6,000 in marked bills was found nine years later near the Columbia River. Dan Cooper's fate was never determined. But as the years passed, it was D.B. Cooper who grew into a legend.

FBI agents scour the banks of the Columbia River searching for money and clues.
Reid Blackburn / Vancouver Columbian

"Either because the Northwest [source] gave it to me wrong or because the noisy [phone] connection helped me misunderstand it," Long says, he wrote down D.B. rather than Dan that day. As history will verify, the wrong name stuck.



The enigmatic initials D.B., as opposed to the more pedestrian Dan, may have even helped stoke Cooper's folk hero image that spawned books, movies and a cottage industry of D.B. novelties such as grow lights, caps and T-shirts – including one for a child emblazoned D.B. Pooper.

America's only unsolved hijacking also produced a seemingly endless line of D.B. suspects. When the FBI announced July 12 that it was inactivating the probe (but still accepting "material" evidence or tips), the agency had investigated and cleared 1,053 suspects, four of them through DNA testing.



FBI closes the books on D.B. Cooper skyjacking mystery

The greatest mystery in the Pacific Northwest has been laid to rest by the FBI: D.B. Cooper's legendary hijacking of an airliner in 1971.

Long says he had told others about his mistake, and fellow reporters and editors knew about it from the beginning. Then last week he read a Columbia Journalism Review story that prompted him to go public.

CJR recounted how late United Press International reporter Clyde Jabin was long thought of as the reporter who got the Cooper name wrong. As CJR writer William Browning explained in his story, he was attempting to determine how Jabin "came to identify one of the most famous American criminals as 'D.B. Cooper' on Nov. 24, 1971."

One of two theories that endured is that Jabin simply made a mental error, Browning determined. "The other involves information an FBI agent gave Jabin that turned stale after it hit the wire."

Jabin, who retired in 1985, died in 2001. He apparently didn't mind the kidding he got at the UPI bureau, and his widow, Joan Jabin, told Browning he was always proud of his reporting that evening. That the world came to know the mystery man as D.B. Cooper was proof, he would say, that his story was first.



FBI Agent Larry Carr displays a parachute left behind by the man who became known as D.B. Cooper.
Andy Rogers / Seattle Post-Intelligencer

After seeing the CJR story, Long decided it was time to take responsibility. "It was my mistake," he wrote in an email to the magazine. CJR contacted him and followed up with a story Friday. An editor's note stated that while Jabin "played a role in spreading the erroneous name D.B. Cooper, it turns out the name itself originated with another journalist."

Long says that's indeed how it happened. In an email to the Los Angeles Times, he writes:

"Browning had no ready way of knowing that UPI and the Oregon Journal were both located basically in the same newsroom -- only a partial partition with windows and a door separated them. To get to UPI, you walked about five steps from our city desk and you were there. Everybody knew everybody and UPI was entitled to Journal stuff and vice versa."

UPI reporters would scoop up duplicates of the Journal's typewritten stories, rewrite or retype them, and send them out on the wire. Long says he doesn't remember all the details, but after getting the garbled name-initials from his airline source, "I wrote a quick story because I was writing for our one-dot edition with a deadline of about 3:30 or 4 [p.m.], and I remember we were pushing it because they kept saying they had to have it now."

He didn't remember if Jabin himself came in for the copy, "but he would have been waiting to pounce on the dupe -- my carbon -- as soon as it hit the city desk. So Clyde likely would have been the first to disseminate D.B. Cooper, on the UPI wire, which meant every radio and TV station got it, although it was a Journal story.

"So that's the full account and you're the first to get it. The FBI did put out a press release, I think it was the next day, saying the hijacker used the name Dan Cooper, and we did run that statement, but it never caught on," he said.

"Everybody just kept saying D.B., and we gave up trying to change it."

Anderson is a special correspondent.

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The return of a Revolutionary mummy

strangeremains.com

By strangeremainson February 15, 2014 • (2)



Admiral John Paul Jones in Life. Photo from Wikipedia.

Admiral John Paul Jones (1747-1792) was a legendary seaman and war hero who fought valiantly in the American Revolution. Jones was a Scottish sailor who commanded a ship in the Continental Navy during the Revolution and is considered a founder of the United States Navy. He inflicted significant damage to the British along the coast of Nova Scotia, and led raids on the British forces along the coasts of Ireland and England.

Admiral John Paul Jones in Life. Photo from Wikipedia.

On July 18, 1792 John Paul Jones died in his Paris apartment. Gouverneur Morris, the American ambassador to France at the time, had an intense dislike for Jones and refused to pay for a proper burial. Luckily Jones had an admirer in Pierrot Francois Simmoneau, who donated the money for his funeral expenses.

Because of his Scottish Calvinist background Jones was buried in the Protestant section of the Saint Louis Cemetery. Jones's body was preserved in alcohol and interred in a lead coffin, which was in turn placed in a wooden coffin, so that his body would be easily identifiable when the United States got around to claiming his remains. But four years after Jones' death, France's revolutionary government sold the cemetery property and all of the bodies buried there were forgotten.



The mummified remains of Admiral John Paul Jones. Photo credit: USNI.org (see full size image here)

In 1899 General Horace Porter, the U.S. Ambassador to France 1897-1905, and a team of researchers started a six- year investigation for the remains of Admiral John Paul Jones. This was a deeply personal search for Porter because in his own words, "I felt a deep sense of humiliation as an American citizen in realizing that our first and most fascinating naval hero had been lying for more than a century in an unknown and forgotten grave…"

The team discovered the site of Saint Louis Cemetery's Protestant section and unearthed Jones' lead coffin in 1905. On April 7, 1905, the Jones' remains were positively identified during a post-mortem examination. The research team determined that the mummified body belonged to a man who was between 40 and 50 years old, and was about 5'7″ inches tall, all of which was consistent with Jones at the time of his death. The body was clothed in a linen shirt, and his long brown hair, about 30 inches long, was covered in a linen cap that was monogrammed with the letters "J" and "P." Jones's body was immediately transported back to the U.S. aboard the USS *Brooklyn*.

On April 24, 1906, Jones's coffin was installed at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. During the ceremony President Theodore Roosevelt gave the eulogy. On January 26, 1913, the Admiral's remains were re-interred in an ornate bronze and marble sarcophagus in the Naval Academy Chapel.

Source:

Grant, P. (2012). The Resurrection of John Paul Jones. Naval History Magazine. Volume 26,

Number 1. Retrieved on February 15th, 2014 from: http://www.usni.org/magazines/navalhistory/2012-01/resurrection-john-paul-jones

Morris, D.R. (1996). The last voyage of John Paul Jones. Retrieved on February 15th, 2014 from: http://articles.baltimoresun.com/1996-12-18/news/1996353142_1_gouverneur-morris-rum-foreign-protestants

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Rio Olympics: Body parts wash up on volleyball beach

By Tiffany Ap , CNN Updated 12:56 AM ET, Thu June 30, 2016
2016-06-30T04:56:15Z

cnn.com



brazil olympics curse watson pkg_00015907

Brazil's perfect storm of crises ahead of Olympics

Rio residents fight evictions ahead of Olympics



(CNN)With just 38 days to go before the Rio Olympics kicks off, the situation in the host city just went from bad to worse.

A beach goer Wednesday discovered mutilated human body parts that had washed up on the shore, right in front of the Olympic Beach Volleyball Arena on Rio's famed Copacabana beach.
A dismembered foot and another body part still unidentified was found, according to Andre Luiz, an officer of the Military Police. Police believe the victim was a woman or young adult.
Although the circumstances surrounding the person's death are unknown, it is another embarrassing blow to the host country -- already reeling from financial problems, a mishap-prone Olympic torch and an outbreak of the mosquito-borne Zika virus.



A runner passes by the body parts that were found near the Olympics beach volleyball stadium, visible in the background.

Rio de Janeiro is broke

Two days before the gruesome body parts discovery, the acting governor of the state of Rio de Janeiro warned that the Games could be a "big failure" because the state is out of money.
"I am optimistic about the games, but I have to show the reality. We can make a great Olympics, but if some steps are not taken, it can be a big failure," Francisco Dornelles told Brazilian newspaper O Globo.
Some of the Olympic Games costs are funded by the city of Rio de Janeiro, but the burden also falls on the Rio de Janeiro state government, and it is in bad shape.
The state declared an official emergency and requested a federal bailout earlier this month but it hasn't received the money. Dornelles warned of a breakdown in essential public services and said without the emergency funds, the police force could only cover its costs to the end of the week.
Rio Olympics 2016's perfect storm

'Welcome to hell'

The frustration over unpaid wages for members of law enforcement boiled over in several protests. That same day, several people held up at a banner at the airport that said: "Welcome to hell. Police and firefighters don't get paid, whoever comes to Rio de Janeiro will not be safe."
Similar messages have popped up over the city, such as one graffiti on a flyover that warned about the lack of functioning hospitals.

> Welcome, we don't have hospitals! - "Aviso" na estrada do Galeão. (Foto: Tiago Bla) pic.twitter.com/NfnrEukkuT
>
> — Cecília Olliveira (@Cecillia) June 26, 2016

If that refrain sounds familiar, that's because one of Brazil's most successful soccer players Rivaldo Ferreira also warned people earlier to stay away.

Water thrown at Olympics torch

The day prior, a man tried to snuff out the Olympic torch by throwing a bucket of water at it. Marcelino Mateus Silva Proença, 27, missed the torch altogether hitting only the torch bearer and the security guards around it.
He was arrested, and released, and since then, has been posting about the incident on Facebook which he said was a dare from his friends.
"I have the torch, but don't have education, health, security, quality of life..." he said on Monday.

Jaguar killed



<img alt="Jaguar killed during Olympic event" class="media__image" src="http://i2.cdn.turner.com/cnnnext/dam/assets/160621180807-brazil-olympics-jaguar-killed-large-169.jpg">

Replay
More Videos ...
Jaguar killed during Olympic event
An even bigger fuss was created over another Olympic torch incident, when a jaguar called Juma that was being exhibited with the torch relay escaped from her handlers and was shot by a soldier.
Rio 2016's organizing committee quickly proffered up an apology, saying they had "made a mistake" putting a wild animal near the torch and guaranteed no more situations like this will occur during the Games.

Can they pull it off?

That's all in a week's work for Rio's Olympics organizers.
There are other issues of concern of course, like the untreated sewage in the waters which athletes complained have made them break out in disease. The U.S. Olympic rowing team is taking extra precautions and will be wearing seamless antimicrobial unisuits to compete, while the German sailing team has been practicing trying to sail in trash-coated waters.

Full coverage of Rio Olympics 2016

On a country-wide level, Brazil is grappling with the Zika virus outbreak causing one Olympian to freeze his sperm, a doping scandal in which Brazil's only testing lab was suspended, a crime wave, and political upheaval involving the country's highest figures.

So is Rio ready? Time will tell.

Brent Swails in Rio de Janeiro contributed to this report.

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Watch Russia hosting the annual 'tank Olympics'

17:18, 2 Aug 2016 Updated 17:54, 2 Aug 2016 By Ross Logan

mirror.co.uk

Russia hosts annual 'TANK OLYMPICS' as armoured vehicles from 17 nations race each other and blow things up



Russia post bizarre 'TANK OLYMPICS' footage set to hardcore rock music

It remains unclear exactly what Russia's involvement will be in this year's Olympics in Rio following revelations of state-ordered doping.

But that hasn't stopped the nation holding an " Olympics" of its own - albeit an Olympics with tanks.

This is the Tank Biathlon World Championships, currently taking place just outside Moscow during the International Military Games.



Getty

Russia is holding the annual Tank Biathlon World Championships near Moscow
Russia are the world champions of driving tanks

A total of 17 nations - including China and Russia - are taking part in the competition, which involves the military vehicles navigating a series of obstacles before firing their cannons at targets.

Dramatic footage of the competition has been uploaded to YouTube - and it couldn't really be more Russian in its perception of masculinaty.



Getty

Just as the President Vladimir Putin is wont to pose shirtless while fishing and riding horses, the Tank Biathlon is presented with a pounding heavy metal soundtrack, lots of fire and men with big guns running around in front of even bigger tanks.

Russia's president Vladimir Putin
The event involves driving around an obstacle course at speed then firing at targets
There are 17 nations competing in the event

The event was devised by the Russian Military three years ago, inspired by the Biathlon, a winter sport involving cross country skiing and rifle shooting.



Getty



Getty



Getty

It"s popularity has soared since the first event, with a record 51 crews taking part this year.

Russia have been victorious in the previous two contests and will be hoping to make it a hat trick on August 13, when the last four remaining teams battle it out in the final race.

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Russian pranksters call heads of WADA and US anti-doping agency

July 22, 2016 yahoo.com

MOSCOW (Reuters) - Russian media published on Friday calls by two comedians to the heads of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) and the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency (USADA) pretending to be Ukrainian Sports Minister Ihor Zhdanov.

Pranskters Vladimir Kuznetsov and Alexei Stolyarov separately called WADA head Craig Reedie and USADA head Travis Tygart, according to recordings published online by Sputnik, a Russian state-owned news agency.

Sputnik said the two callers "managed to trick" the two anti-doping officials "into revealing the truth behind the doping scandal". They made the calls for a comedy show on Russia's NTV channel, which will be shown on Friday evening.

Publishing the calls ahead of the program, Sputnik said they had been made on May 28, before the results of a WADA-backed investigation into doping allegations were published.

Kuznetsov asked Reedie whether he thought the results of the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics should be revised in light of the doping scandal. Reedie said that he didn't yet see proof of Russia's wrong-doing and advised the caller, believing him to be Zhdanov, to await the results of the investigation.

Stolyarov also asked Tygart whether Sochi biathlon results should be revised, resulting in Ukrainians gaining medals awarded to Russians. Tygart said that this could potentially happen, but also said this would depend on the investigation.

President Vladimir Putin and his allies have deftly deflected the blame for the scandal by passing it off as a western Cold War-style plot to sabotage Russia's international comeback.

Kuznetsov and Stolyarov have a history of making embarrassing calls to celebrities, notably British singer Elton John, who spoke to them last September believing he was speaking to Putin.

(Reporting By Jason Bush)

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Russian 'runaway robot' causes traffic jam - BBC News

bbc.com

http://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-news-from-elsewhere-36547139

By News from Elsewhere... ...as found by BBC Monitoring



Image copyrightYouTube

The escaped robot spent more than half an hour in the middle of a busy road

A robot escaped from a science lab and caused a traffic jam in one Russian city, it's reported.

Scientists at the Promobot laboratories in Perm had been teaching the machine how to move around independently, but it broke free after an engineer forgot to shut a gate, says the local edition of the Argumenty i Fakty newspaper. The robot found its way to a nearby street, covering a distance of about 50m (164ft), before its battery ran out, the daily says.

An eyewitness video posted online shows a vaguely humanoid machine standing in the middle of a busy road, guarded by a traffic policeman. It is then wheeled off by a human, presumably an engineer from the company that developed the robot.

Russian Channel 5 TV also showed footage of the incident, and said that the robot spent about 40 minutes at large.

But not everyone is convinced that the robot's escape was accidental: some in the Russian media have argued that it's all a ploy devised by Promobot to draw attention to its creation.

The company says its machines can interact with humans, for example by answering questions and giving directions. But as the name Promobot suggests, its primary purpose seems to be broadcasting promotional audio messages via built-in loudspeakers.

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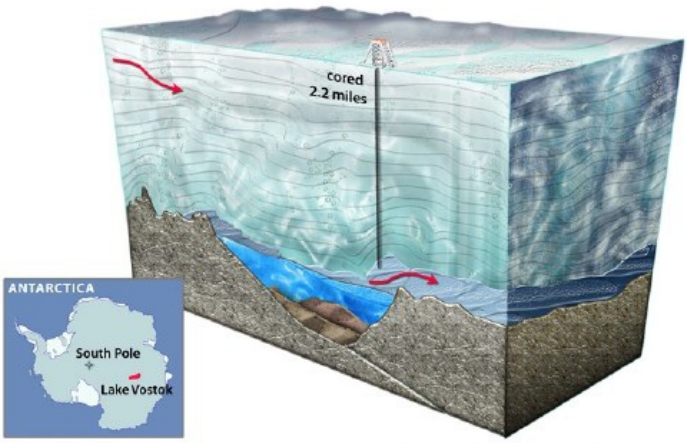
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Russian Scientist Claims Team Battled Creature Under Antarctic Ice

forsythstories.com



Best and Worst of Horror Horror Reviews and Bizarre News



LAKE VOSTOK is 1,000 miles deep with a surface area equal to Lake Ontario.

By C. Michael Forsyth

GENEVA — A defecting Russian scientist has surfaced with a mind-bending account of what REALLY occurred when he and his colleagues went missing for five days in a mysterious lake 12,366 feet beneath the Antarctic ice.

Dr. Anton Padalka told authorities in Switzerland that the researchers discovered a bizarre and deadly life form dubbed Organism 46-B – a highly intelligent octopus-like creature that claimed the lives of three of the team members.

But the government of Russian president Vladimir Putin claimed that “nothing of scientific interest” was found – because the former KGB strongman hopes to weaponize the organism.

“The discovery of such unusual life in Lake Vostok was the most important scientific breakthrough in decades, but we were ordered not to divulge it because of Mr. Putin’s sinister scheme,” the whistleblowing geologist told the Swiss.

It was in early February 2012 that members of the Russian Antarctic Expedition succeeded in the drilling through more than two miles of thick ice to Lake Vostok – a project that took more than 30 years. Because the freshwater lake has been sealed off from the rest of the world for between 15 and 34 million years, scientists had predicted they would find new species that had evolved far differently than any seen before.

“According to our research, the quantity of oxygen there exceeds that on other parts of our planet by 10 to 20 times. Any life forms that we find are likely to be unique on Earth,” Sergey Bulat, the project’s Chief Scientist said on Russian TV as the geologists were drilling down.

Previously, extremely weird creatures had been found in deep-sea vents off the coast of Antarctica including hairy-chested yeti crabs that feed on gardens of bacteria they cultivate on their bodies and carnivorous, seven-armed sea stars that can catch and kill those crabs.

Just as the eight man team neared the lake all communication with the outside world mysteriously ceased. As days crept by and the researchers failed to respond to increasing frantic efforts to reach them by radio, fellow scientists worldwide feared the worst.

“No word from the ice for 5 days,” Dr. John Priscu, a professor of ecology at Montana State University and head of a similar Antarctic exploration program grimly told Fox News at the time. “I can only imagine what it’s like.”

Or maybe he couldn’t. Dr Padalka claims that during this time, he and his colleagues were fighting for their lives in the lost world deep beneath the earth’s surface.

“We encountered Organism 46-B on day one as we were conducting a preliminary dive in our low-temperature wetsuits,” he recounts. “It disabled our radio, which we later learned to our alarm, was intentional.”



Octopuses like this vitrelladonella richardi are known for extreme intelligence.

Although the creature has 14 arms instead of the usual eight, it kills in a similar manner to an ordinary octopus — seizing its prey, injecting it with paralyzing saliva then dismembering it into small pieces with its beak. But Organism 46-B has another trick up its sleeve.

“It is able to paralyze prey at a distance of up to 150 feet by releasing its venom into the water from an organ similar to its ink sac,” explained Dr. Padlaka. “Tragically, my colleague and life-long friend Dr. Vindogradov was killed this way. He tread water wearing a blissful smile as the organism approached him. We watched helplessly as it used its arms to tear off his head, then popped his remains its mouth. It was as if it had hypnotized him telepathically.”

The 33-foot-long man-eater also boasts extraordinary camouflage that helped it stalk the researchers.

“Many species of octopus can alter their appearance, usually to avoid larger predators,” Dr. Padalka explained. “Sacs of colorful pigments called chromatophores allow them to change colors, and by contracting their muscles they can blend in with the smooth ocean floor or a craggy coral reef. The well-known mimic octopus can contort its boneless body to take on the shape of a sea snake or stingray.”

But the shape-shifting abilities of Organism 46-B sound almost diabolical.

“It shaped itself into the form of a human diver. We thought it was one my colleagues swimming toward us in scuba gear. By the time the closest scientist realized what it was, it had grabbed him and torn him to bits.”

If an arm of an ordinary octopus is cut off, the severed limb will crawl away – sometimes even seize prey and place it in the mouth of the octopus. Experts say that’s because each arm contains a

cluster of neurons – essentially its own brain. The arms of Organism 46-B demonstrated a chilling knack for operating autonomously.

"After our sole female researcher chopped off one of the arms with an ax, the severed limb yanked the weapon out of her hands," recalled the scientist. "That night the arm slithered onto the icy bank where we were sleeping and strangled her."

The experts believe that not only does the octopus regenerate its limbs, the brainy severed tentacle may be able to form a new octopus.

Octopuses are extraordinarily intelligent, able to negotiate mazes, use tools and even build structures with Legos. The newly discovered entity is in a class by itself.

"From the way it adapted each time we changed our tactics, we became convinced it is at least as intelligent as an average human," Dr. Padalka revealed. "If we were not all Ph.Ds, I fear it would have in the end outwitted us."

Miraculously, the eggheads were able to capture the creature in a tank. After the five surviving scientists made their way to the surface, the program's director ordered that the bore hole be immediately plugged. The geologists expected to be honored internationally for their amazing find. To their great disappointment, however, the Russian government claimed that the team had found no life in Lake Vostok – and denied that divers had even entered the water.

"There's nothing much down there, I can assure you," according to a statement by the chief of the Vostok Research Station, A. M. Yelagin. The director of the Russian Antarctic Expedition, Valery Lukin, admitted that the plug had been put in place but called the precaution "routine."

U.S. and British experts were puzzled by the announcement.

"It's a little bit of an anti-climax," geologist Dr. David L. Meckenroy of the U.K. said on TV at the time. "It's hard to believe we were so wrong about there being unusual life down there."



COLD AS ICE: Russian President Putin is known for ruthlessness and secrecy.

Dr. Padalka claims he fled his native country in July after learning to his horror that the government is planning to put the discovery to military use.

"Some species of octopus lay 200,000 eggs," he pointed out. "Imagine if they were deposited in reservoirs and lakes across North America?"

The Russian government calls the whistleblower's claims preposterous.

"It is laughable. Ho, ho, ho," declared Mikhail Belochkin of the Bureau of Truthful Information. "It sounds like something you might see on one of your science fiction TV channels. The Cold War is over, my friends. If our scientists made a discovery of such magnitude, do you seriously doubt that we would share it with the world?"

Copyright C. Michael Forsyth

is available in hardcover and softcover at Amazon.com. But you can save $4 by clicking HERE! The Kindle version is just $7 and the Ebook is a measly $5. Be the first on your block to read this bone-chilling tale — *before* the motion picture hits the big screen.

Posted September 25, 2012 by C. Michael Forsyth in Antarctica, conspiracy theories, Uncategorized

Tagged with Antarctica, bizarre sea creatures, drilling, Lake Vostok, Lake Vostok conspiracy theories, marine biology, monsters, most bizarre sea creatues, Russian Antarctic expedition, sea creatures, Vladimir Putin, weird science

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Ryan Bundy wants $1M to be ‘defendant’ or ‘judge’

koin.com

The Bundy Brothers face federal charges in the Malheur Refuge takeover

KOIN 6 News Staff Published: July 28, 2016, 4:57 pm Updated: July 29, 2016, 4:09 pm

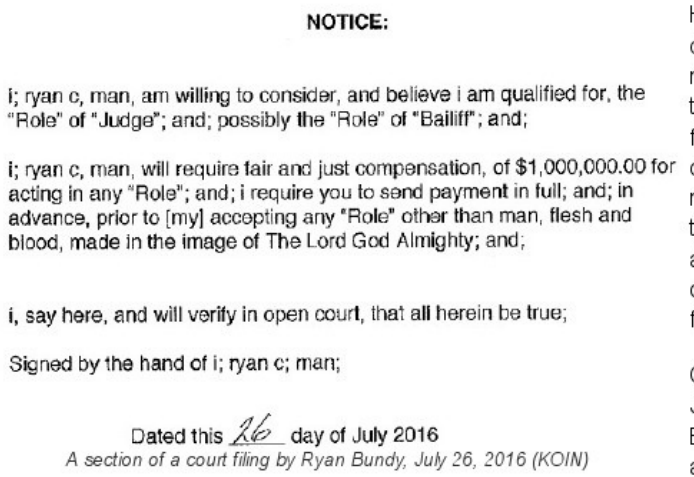


Ryan Bundy in a mug shot from Feb. 19, 2016 (Multnomah County Sheriff's Office)

PORTLAND, Ore. (KOIN) — In bizarre court documents filed Tuesday, Ryan Bundy declared himself sovereign from state and federal government and wanted to be paid $1 million to accept “the role” of defendant or inmate.

Bundy, the brother of co-defendant Ammon Bundy in the case of the takeover of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, is acting as his own attorney. The federal court filings were submitted by his court-appointed legal assistant.

Ryan Bundy said he does not accept the role as defendant or inmate without fair and just compensation of $1 million. He also said he is willing to play the “role” of “judge” or “bailiff” for $1 million.



NOTICE:

i; ryan c, man, am willing to consider, and believe i am qualified for, the "Role" of "Judge"; and; possibly the "Role" of "Bailiff"; and;

i; ryan c, man, will require fair and just compensation, of $1,000,000.00 for acting in any "Role"; and; i require you to send payment in full; and; in advance, prior to [my] accepting any "Role" other than man, flesh and blood, made in the image of The Lord God Almighty; and;

i, say here, and will verify in open court, that all herein be true;

Signed by the hand of i; ryan c; man;

Dated this 26 day of July 2016

A section of a court filing by Ryan Bundy, July 26, 2016 (KOIN)

He also demanded $100 million if he has to face a judge for the conspiracy matter related to the takeover and occupation of the federal facility.

On Friday, Judge Anna Brown rejected all of Ryan Bundy's most recent filings and warned him that any future attempts to not follow Court Orders “could result in Ryan Bundy forfeiting the right to self-representation.”

The Bundy brothers and 6 more people will stand trial in September. Another 8 people will stand trial beginning February 14, 2017.

KOIN 6 News will continue to follow this story.

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Santeria priestess in Loudoun found guilty of animal cruelty after ritual sacrifice

By Justin Jouvenal
August 3 at 8:53 PM

washingtonpost.com



Mercy Carrion (Loudoun County Sheriff's Office)

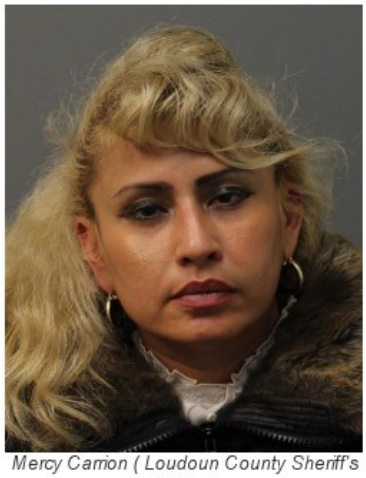
Mercy Carrion greeted the officers who arrived at her Loudoun County home in April to investigate a report of animal cruelty in a blood-soaked white shirt, according to testimony at her trial Wednesday.

Blood was smeared around the doorway of the home, a large knife was found next to the kitchen sink, and the decapitated bodies of two roosters were discovered in a filing cabinet, officers told a judge.

Despite the grisly scene, Carrion, 43, of Sterling, Va., argued in Loudoun County Court on Wednesday that the animal cruelty charges brought against her violated her First Amendment right to freedom of religion. She is a priestess in the Afro-Caribbean religion of Santeria, whose practitioners sometimes offer animal sacrifices.

"I tried to explain to [the officer] you offered the bodies of the animals to the saints," Carrion told the court through a Spanish interpreter. "There are elders in my church, and I was instructed to do this."

A Loudoun County prosecutor sidestepped the religious issue, arguing that Carrion could sacrifice the birds, but she flouted Virginia law by failing to care for them beforehand and then slaughtering them in an inhumane way.


Mercy Carrion (Loudoun County Sheriff's Office)

"She has a right to practice her religion," Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney Alexandra Hazel said in her closing argument. "She deprived these animals of food, water and shelter and then cruelly killed them."

A judge ultimately sided with the prosecutor, convicting Carrion of three misdemeanor counts of animal cruelty, but not before an unusual trial played out that featured testimony about a rooster autopsy, or necropsy, and an expert on religions of the African diaspora.

Loudoun County animal control officers testified that they were called to Carrion's home on April 25 for a report of animal cruelty. They found three roosters in feces- and urine-soaked beer boxes in Carrion's basement. One officer said the birds could not properly move in the boxes.

Officers returned the next day at 1 a.m. to serve a search warrant on Carrion's home and found her in the bloody shirt. Carrion testified that she killed the birds just before officers knocked on her door because she wanted to follow through on the sacrifice.

Santeria is a religion that combines elements of Catholicism, West African religious beliefs and the traditions of the indigenous people of the Americas. It is often practiced by the descendants of slaves brought to the Americas.

The officers testified that they found no evidence of food for the roosters in the house and that Carrion told them that the roosters she had killed had died over the course of three to five minutes, a period Hazel argued was not humane. They also recovered one live rooster.

Michael Gast, a veterinarian, testified that the dead birds and the live rooster were emaciated and showed signs that their muscles had wasted away. He said the dead birds' heads were severed in a careful manner after examining them during a necropsy.

"There was an intricate cut," Gast testified. "It would take some skill to do that."

Gro Mambo Danthoula Novanyon Idizol, executive board secretary of the National African Religious Congress, testified for the defense that Carrion, who is originally from Ecuador, was a certified priestess in Santeria. Mercy Carrion is her given name.

Idizol said Santeria practitioners should keep animals properly, before they are slaughtered humanely, and should be disposed of in a proper fashion. She said animals are often prayed over and bathed with herbs before they are killed.

Idizol said Carrion's handling of the animals was not inhumane.

"In this country that we live in, people do not have access to all of the things necessary in our belief systems," Idizol testified. "If you're asking me if this is inhumane, I don't think so."

When she took the stand, Carrion testified that she fed the roosters and had purchased them in the condition the officers found them. She told the judge that she had owned them for only two to three days before the slaughter.

Michelle Welch, director of Attorney General Mark Herring's Animal Law Unit, said that under Virginia law, people cannot treat animals cruelly, even if it is for religious reasons.

"The issue is with the manner of the killing of an animal and whether it constitutes cruelty," Welch said in a statement. "Virginia State Code does not include a specific religious exemption that would allow someone to kill an animal in a way that constitutes cruelty."

Judge Deborah C. Welsh sentenced Carrion to a suspended jail sentence and ordered her to undergo training in how to properly sacrifice animals through a class Idizol's group offers. Carrion and her attorney declined to comment on the outcome of the trial.

- **washingtonpost.com**
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Sasquatch Bares All In Fierce New Photoshoot

huffingtonpost.com

The Squatch has never let conventional beauty standards define him.

07/09/2016 11:00 am ET

- David MoyeReporter, The Huffington Post



Courtesy of Jack Link's

ESPN magazine's annual body issue just hit the stands and shows athletes of all shapes and sizes in the buff.

But one active celebrity literally stands above all others: Sasquatch, the mascot of Jack Link's beef jerky, who measures in at 8 feet, 1 inch and 374 pounds.

As part of the issue, Sasquatch posed in the buff for an advertorial with only a raccoon and lots of body hair covering his privates.

The photo for the two-page spread came out great, but the "Squatch" turned out to be a bit of a diva, as this behind-the scenes footage demonstrates:

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Satanic prayer at council meeting disrupted by crowd

PENSACOLA, Fla. (WEAR) —

weartv.com

By Jasmine Anderson / Allie Norton
Thursday, July 14th 2016
A satanic prayer was disrupted during a city council meeting in Pensacola, Fla. Thursday, July 14, 2016. (WEAR)

A satanic prayer held at Pensacola city council meeting was disrupted by a crowd Thursday night. Police escorted people out of the meeting.

"I saw community of people come together and take a stand for what was right," explained Bruce Gullie.

The invocation was delivered by a member of the Satanic Temple.

Parishioners with the United Methodist Church of Pace staged outside city hall ready to pray, while hundreds filled the seats inside.

David Suhor, co-founder of the local chapter of the Satanic Temple approached the podium, causing the crowd to stand and begin the Lord's Prayer.

Council President Charles Bare called order and told the crowd they had to be quiet or they would have to leave. Pensacola Police escorted numerous people out.

"If you deviate away from what I feel is proper invocation speech, I will have you removed from the chamber," Bare ordered.

"I would rather be in a room than let darkness sit here by itself," one man in the audience said.

Once order was regained, Suhor began his invocation. Many continued to pray. Councilmember Gerald Wingate walked out.

Afterwards, several people in the crowd took to the podium to express their disapproval with the council's decision to allow the Suhor's invocation in the first place.

"When you invoke a name any other name under heaven that is not the Lord Jesus Christ your almost invite cursing or disaster to fall on you," said Vickie Truett.

Suhor returned to the podium, starting a conversation about invocation rights that the council president agreed with.

"Quit pushing Christian privilege as we see with the Bayview cross and so many other issues and go to a moment of silence and let everyone pray or not, according to their own conscience," David Suhor said.

Channel 3's Allie Norton attended the meeting. Take a look at her video of the disruption.

Pensacola, FL
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WEAR, ABC 3 is the ABC affiliate for Northwest Florida and South Alabama that provides local news, weather forecasts, traffic updates, notices of events and items of interest in the community, sports and entertainment programming for Pensacola, Florida and Mobile, Alabama and nearby towns and communities in the Gulf Coast area, including in Florida: Pensacola, Gulf Breeze, Cantonment, Century, Jay, Pace, Milton, Perdido Key, Pensacola Beach, Navarre, Fort Walton Beach, Valparaiso, Niceville, Destin, Sandestin, Wright, Holt, Crestview, Baker, Chumuckla; and in Alabama: Orange Beach, Robertsdale, Gulf Shores, Stapleton, Elberta, Fairhope, Daphne, Prichard, Chickasaw, Saraland, Satsuma, Tilman's Corner, Theodore, Bayou la Batre, Dauphin Island, Foley, Bay Minette, Atmore, Flomaton, Brewton, Florala, Semmes, Spanish Fort, and Lillian.

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Satire site blames Merkel for burnt pizza, Pokemon problems

July 28, 2016

yahoo.com



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FILE - In this Saturday, July 23, 2016 file photo, German Chancellor Angela Merkel arrives for a statement on the Munich attack in Berlin. Who's to blame for socks with holes and empty beer glasses? Angela Merkel, according to a Facebook page set up by Germans with a satirical sense of humor. The page "Danke Merkel" — meaning "thanks, Merkel" — blames the German chancellor for many of life's little problems, including burnt pizza, broken pencils and overloaded "Pokemon Go" servers. (AP Photo/Michael Sohn, file)

BERLIN (AP) — Who's to blame for socks with holes and empty beer glasses?

Angela Merkel, according to a Facebook page set up by Germans with a satirical sense of humor.

The page "Danke Merkel" — meaning "thanks, Merkel" — blames the German chancellor for many of life's little problems, including burnt pizza, broken pencils and overloaded "Pokemon Go" servers.

While it's unclear who created the page, it appears to be poking fun at German nationalists who regularly use social media to accuse the chancellor of trying to harm her own country.

—

Danke Merkel (in German): https://www.facebook.com/dankemerkel

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Loch Ness monster down under

stuff.co.nz

stuff MIKE WATSON

Last updated 12:26, July 28 2016



DEREK FLYNN/FAIRFAX NZ Scotsman Alan Hall has shaped his hedge into a giant outline of the Loch Ness monster. "It's now taken on a life of it own," he says.

A displaced Scotsman, now living in suburban Blenheim, has carved out a larger than life figurine of the Loch Ness monster on his front lawn.

Alan Hall, originally from near Stirling, began sculpturing a flat silver germander hedge in front of his property in Witherlea into geometric shapes six years ago.

As the seasons passed, the hedge grew as the shapes gathered definition into eventually revealing an animal like figure.



DEREK FLYNN/FAIRFAX NZ Nessie is evolving throughout the seasons.

"Someone said it looked like a deer," he says.

In typical Scot fashion he replied, 'Maybe."

But the shape piqued his creative reserves.

With a bit more trimming, and nurturing, what had resembled a 'deer' soon became something closer to his heart-a green beast uncannily similar in shape to the infamous Loch Ness monster.

"For want of a better name it is now known as Nessie, " Alan says.

The topiary shape is definitely no 'tim'rous beastie', although its silhouette may cause a panic in 'thy breastie' on a dark and stormy night.

Alan has visited Loch Ness many times when he lived in Scotland as a young builder,

and is due to pay his respects next month when he returns to the Highlands.

The recreational road cyclist doesn't necessarily believe in monsters but there is a certain credence to a creature living in the deep lake, he says.

"We once met a couple of old guys who fished on the loch and they believed the monster was actually a gigantic eel.

"There's something there-possibly it's a huge eel that just got a bit too big."

The legend of the Loch Ness monster dates back to the sixth century when Irish monk St Columba supposedly banished a 'water beast' to the depths of the River Ness.

Now hundreds of thousands of tourists visit the area every year hoping to spot the monster peeping out from the deep waters.

Four years ago a pleasure boat skipper spotted an object on sonar more than 1.5 metres wide and 20 metres below the surface, at a depth of 200 metres.

Emailnewstips@stuff.co.nz

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The Screaming Heads North of Muskoka - Explorers' Edge: Algonquin Park|Almaguin Highlands|Loring-Restoule|Muskoka|Parry Sound Arts & Entertainment, Attractions, Outdoor Adventures

explorersedge.ca

by Guest Blogger in Arts & Entertainment, Attractions, Outdoor Adventures on July 20, 2014

This summer and fall, check out the outdoor art exhibit that's a must-see in the Almaguin Highlands north of Muskoka.

The **Almaguin Highlands** is rich with artists and artisans—potters, sculptors, wood-crafters, glass-workers, and painters of every medium and style. All are interesting individuals, but one in particular stands out when it comes to sheer scale of size. Artist Peter Camani has created an immense, surreal artscape of huge cast-concrete sculptures throughout his 310-acre property. Locally referred to as Screaming Heads, the property serves as the artist's home as well as his canvas. Visitors are welcome to wander the trails that wind through meadows, past woods and ponds, to get up close to—or even walk through—his artwork. When there, don't forget to take a closer look at Mr. Camani's house, surrounded by thick walls and adorned by a two-headed dragon and a warrior princess. The giant head on the back of the building houses the artist's studio. At least one of the wall towers is a shelter for the many resident peacocks.

Explorers' Edge



screaming heads



screaming heads 2

Some people find a visit to **Screaming Heads** eerie, others find it intriguing. I, for one, relish the chance to put myself inside another's artistic vision and step away from the everyday. If nothing else, everyone can agree that it's a unique and impressive piece of work.

You'll find **Screaming Heads** on Midlothian Road, near the town of **Burk's Falls**. There is a parking lot beside the house, and a donation box in case you feel the art is worth supporting. Since it is a private home as well as an art exhibit, if the gate to the parking lot is closed, just enjoy the view from



screaming heads 2

the road.

Guest Blogger: Jackie Leung

*Jackie and her husband Jim are the proprietors **Fern Glen Inn**, a four-season country B&B nestled on 120 forest acres in the **Almaguin Highlands** of Ontario – just north of **Hunstville**, **Muskoka** and west of **Algonquin Park**. A great tour guide, Jackie also writes a **blog** about everything there is to see and do during your visit to the region.*

© Explorers' Edge, RTO 12, 2016

Funded by the Government of Ontario

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Seal found sleeping in cemetery bathroom

upi.com

By Daniel Uria | July 27, 2016 at 10:20 AM
Follow @oddnewsupi

DEVONPORT, Australia, July 27 (UPI) -- A sleepy seal was found enjoying a nap in the women's bathroom at an Australian cemetery before being relocated back to the ocean.

Devonport City Council shared a photo of the sleeping seal, which was discovered in the women's restroom by staff at Mersey Vale Cemetery on Monday morning.

Advertisement

"Perhaps he just wanted somewhere peaceful to sleep," the city council joked in a Facebook post. "Clearly he's been on a bit of an adventure and is a long way from home."

City council staff allowed the seal, which they nicknamed Sammy, to continue its nap in the restroom until Parks and Wildlife arrived to check up on it until they were able to send a recovery team.

Once the recovery operation was complete and Sammy was sent back out to the beach, Devonport City Council shared a photo of the newly free seal and thanked Parks and Wildlife for their assistance.

"Huge thanks to our friends at the Parks and Wildlife Service and the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment," they wrote. "Sammy has now hit the beach and is getting ready to go for a surf!"

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Travels to Whitby: My Search for Count Dracula's Birth Certificate | Vamped

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by

Leonard Lee July 24, 2016, 12:32 am



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Whitby's Dracula. A sign promoting "In Search of Dracula," a walk hosted by Harry Collett, rests against a seat overlooking the East Cliff in Whitby, North Yorkshire, United Kingdom. The seaside town is visited by *Dracula* buffs due to Bram Stoker setting part of his novel there. Picture: Leonard Lee.

As anyone who has read Bram Stoker *Dracula* (1897) will know, Whitby on the North Yorkshire coast has a major claim to literary fame, being the place that Stoker chose as the location for chapters six, seven and eight of his famous novel.

It was also in the Whitby Subscription Library that he found William Wilkinson's *An Account of the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia* (1820); an old history book about a region of Eastern Europe which is now modern-day Romania.

On page nineteen he came across a fairly unremarkable footnote about a local voivode who had been given the title of "Dracula":

> Dracula in the Wallachian language means Devil. The Wallachians were, at that time, as they are at present, used to give this as a surname to any person who rendered himself conspicuous either by courage, cruel actions, or cunning.

This was a key moment for the novel. It was so important, this single page in Wilkinson's book has even been called "Count Dracula's birth certificate."

Travels to Whitby



Count Dracula's "birth certificate" inside? Entrance to the Whitby Literary and Philosophical Society, located in Whitby Museum. Picture: Leonard Lee.

I've always been fascinated by Dracula. When I went to Whitby for the first time in 1994 I fell in love with the town and its Victorian atmosphere. Now, over two decades later, I try to spend a few days there, at least once a year.

Sadly, the United Kingdom is also famous for having bad weather and it was on a particularly cold, wet and windy Monday afternoon on May 30, 2016, that I found myself in Whitby Museum looking at the famous fossil collection.

13705177_521279961396912_13 Tucked away in the corner of the building I spotted the doors to the Whitby Literary and Philosophical Society and suddenly remembered that this is where Stoker read Wilkinson's book and saw that famous footnote. Wouldn't it be amazing if the book was still there and I was able to hold it for myself for in my own hands? I decided to investigate.

The Dracula/Whitby Connection



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Where the *Demeter* landed. View of Tate Hill Sands. Picture: Leonard Lee.

Whitby itself is pretty much like any other seaside resort in the United Kingdom. As well as having a fairly nice beach, it has all the other usual attractions such as donkey rides, amusement arcades, gift shops and, of course our national dish, fish and chips (and very good ones they are too!). If that was all there was to Whitby it would indeed be just another coastal town, but its connection with Dracula gives it an extra special dimension.

Strangely, though, I've always had the feeling that, for many of the locals in Whitby, this connection has been a bit of a mixed blessing. On the one hand it brings many tourists and revenue to the town, particularly during the annual Goth Weekend while, at the same time, they find it a little tedious when some people believe that Dracula was a real person, the events in the novel actually happened and that the Count is buried up in St. Mary's Churchyard.

Fortunately, Whitby has changed very little since Stoker visited in the late nineteenth century. At the beginning of chapter six, he provides a very clear description of the town as seen by Mina while she sits on her "favourite seat" in St. Mary's Churchyard up on the East Cliff. Based on this description I believe it is still possible to see everything Mina saw including the harbour and Tate Hill Sands where the *Demeter* mysteriously runs aground during the great storm and where, in the form of a big black dog, Count Dracula jumps ashore.



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A famous view. The Bram Stoker Memorial Seat on Whitby's West Cliff bears a plaque commemorating Stoker's description of some Whitby scenes in *Dracula*. Picture: Leonard Lee.

To the left of Mina's seat are the famous 199 abbey steps that Dracula runs up, and directly behind it is the graveyard where he attacks Lucy for the first time.

Whitby's 199 Steps. Following Stoker's description, Dracula ascended these steps. Picture Leonard Lee.

It's an amazing feeling sitting up there during the day but at night, with heavy seas breaking over the harbour walls and an eerie, dank mist rolling in off the sea, you almost feel like you could be a

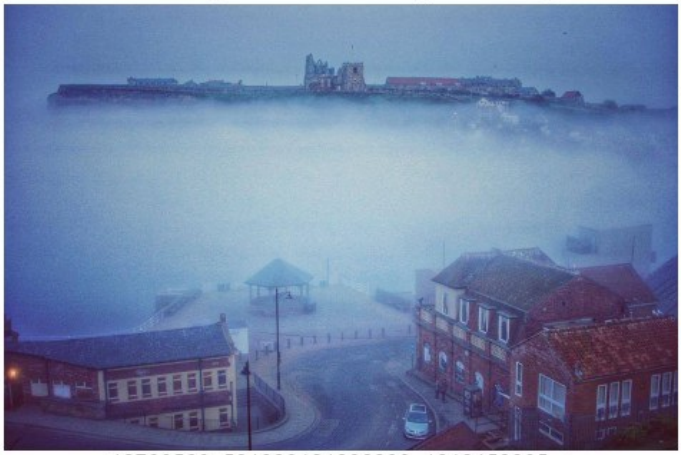


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character in the novel. It is an unforgettable, magically spooky experience.

An "unforgettable, magically spooky experience." Mist rolls out from the sea over Whitby's harbour. Picture: Leonard Lee.

Of course, when Stoker came to Whitby for his holiday in the Summer of 1890 these scenes had yet to be written. According to his working notes for *Dracula*, he had started mapping out his ideas for the book back in London a few months earlier.



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During those early stages the novel was very different to the one we know now. He initially wanted to set the opening chapters in Styria, a province in Austria, but it was only after reading Emily Gerard's article for *Nineteenth Century* magazine, "Transylvanian Superstitions" (July 1885) in which she outlines much of the region's folklore surrounding vampires, that Bram decided it would be a much better location for the Count's mountain top home.

This interest in Eastern Europe may also explain why he chose to flick through Wilkinson's book in Whitby library. He must have been impressed with what he saw on page nineteen because he copied it into his notebook. Reading that name proved to be a pivotal moment for Stoker; he went back through his notes, crossed out anywhere he had written the name "Wampyr" and replaced it with "Dracula."

My Search for Wilkinson's Book



Entrance to Whitby Museum. The museum houses the Whitby Literary and Philosophical Society's library. Picture: Leonard Lee.

I first became aware of Wilkinson's book after reading about it Peter Haining's *The Dracula Scrapbook* (1992) while conducting research for a university project: a short film called *Bram Stoker's Whitby*. At that time, I was studying for a degree in European Audio Visual Production at Humberside University a few miles further down the Yorkshire coast in Hull.

Realising I was only about an hour's drive from Whitby I had decided to make a documentary about the town and its connection to the novel. In those days I hadn't even thought about looking for

Wilkinson's book and it wasn't until I had made several other visits to the town that I became curious about what might have happened to this important piece of literary history.

One evening, a few years ago, I did a "Dracula Walk" with Whitby's very own storyteller, Harry Collett. During our stroll around the town he recounted various vampiric tales as well as pointing out places associated with Bram Stoker's 1890 holiday. One of our stops was a three story building on Pier Road which, Harry informed us, was the very place where Stoker had read Wilkinson's book.

In Stoker's day, the ground floor of the building had been the town's bathhouse while, upstairs housed the museum and library. Today nothing of the museum and library remain. The ground floor is the Quayside fish and chip restaurant and the first floor is now a bar.



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Where Stoker found Wilkinson's book. The library Stoker consulted was once on the first floor. The space is now taken up by a bar called Bar 7. Picture: Leonard Lee.

In April 2012 I attended the Bram Stoker Centenary Conference at the University of Hull and met David Pybus, a Whitby-based researcher. While we were chatting about Wilkinson's book and the the Whitby Museum and Subscription Library, he informed me that the museum re-located in 1931 to a new building just up the road in Pannett Park and the library changed its name to the Whitby Literary and Philosophical Society.

So this brings us right back up to date with my cold, wet and windy day looking at ammonites in Whitby Museum on May 30, 2016. Entry to the Literary and Philosophical Society is limited to certain times but, unfortunately, I was too late for that particular day. Lucky for me that the people of Whitby are kind folk and allowed me in to have a quick chat with a member of staff called Fiona who was still in there.


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Could Wilkinson's book be here? The Whitby Literary and Philosophical Society's library. Picture: Leonard Lee.

I explained to Fiona what I was looking for and was met with a rather pained "oh no, not another Dracula nut" which quickly softened once I further clarified that I was actually looking for a very real history book and not the location of Dracula's grave or some equally fictional folly.

Fiona told me that, unfortunately, she was not the best person to speak to and all that she could offer me for now was a quick look through their card index. Sadly, this proved to be fruitless.

Fiona informed me that this didn't necessarily mean they didn't have the book and that I should

leave a note for her colleague and return the following morning.

When I went back the next day, the actual librarian confirmed that Wilkinson's book was not in their collection and, moreover, never had been. She added that when the library moved, someone went down to the old building and hand picked which books would be moved over. Unfortunately, Wilkinson's book was not one of them. When I asked if she knew what might have happened to the rest of the books she replied "they probably found their way to a dump somewhere."

I was disappointed to say the least, especially when I thought of this iconic piece of history rotting away in landfill. Rest, assured though, this will not be not the end of my search. If, somewhere, a record exists of what actually happened to the books that weren't moved to the new building, I will endeavour to find it.

To console myself I decided to go for a pint at my favourite pub in Whitby, The Black Horse Inn on Church Street, after which I climbed the 199 steps up to St Mary's Church for a walk through the graveyard. I'm not great believer in fate but I am almost prepared to change my view, for right there, written on one of the tombstones, was the name William Wilkinson!



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Is this a sign? The grave of William Wilkinson. Picture: Leonard Lee.

It was clearly a different person; according to his gravestone he had been a "constable of Whitby Strand" and not the "late British consul resident at Bukorest [Bucharest]" as stated on the title page of *An Account of the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia*, but it was still a very spooky coincidence none the less. Perhaps it was even a message from beyond the grave telling me to continue my search?

Notes:

1. **"Count Dracula's birth certificate":** "Dracula," *Nightmare: The Birth of Victorian Horror*, BBC (1996).
2. **the Count is buried up in St. Mary's Churchyard:** "St. Mary's Churchyard" is the colloquial name given to the churchyard attached to St. Mary the Virgin, Whitby, an Anglican parish church on the East Cliff. See itinerary.
3. **Based on this description I believe it is still possible to see everything Mina saw:** The location of Lucy and Mina's favourite seat is based upon my own investigations using the description of the view of Whitby at the beginning of chapter six. Bram Stoker, *Dracula* (London: Arrow Press, 1979), 62. From this vantage point, it is possible to see everything Mina describes in the text.
4. **he had started mapping out his ideas for the book back in London a few months earlier:** Stoker gives the date "8/3/90" – 8 March 1890. Bram Stoker, *Bram Stoker's Notes for* Dracula*: A Facsimile Edition*, annotated and transcribed by Robert Eighteen-Bisang and Elizabeth Miller (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2008), 16.
5. **Bram decided it would be a much better location for the Count's mountain top home:** Elizabeth Miller, interview with the author, ca. May 9, 2009.
6. **He must have been impressed with what he saw on page nineteen:** Stoker, *Bram Stoker's Notes for* Dracula, 244. Stoker emphasised "Dracula" and "Devil" in his transcription

of Wilkinson's footnote by capitalising both words.
7. **I first became aware of Wilkinson's book:** Peter Haining, *The Dracula Scrapbook* (London: Chancellor Press, 1992), 33. Not to be confused with Haining's 1976 book of the same name, this is the revised edition of Haining's *The Dracula Centenary Book* (1987).
8. **It was clearly a different person:** The author of *An Account of the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia* died in Paris on August 23, 1836.

Itinerary:

1. **Whitby Museum:** Pannett Park, Whitby, North Yorkshire. http://www.whitbymuseum.org.uk/.
2. **St. Mary the Virgin, Whitby:** Abbey Plain, East Cliff, Whitby. https://www.achurchnearyou.com/whitby-st-mary/.
3. **Whitby's 199 Steps:** 199 Steps, Whitby. http://www.whitbyonline.co.uk/whitby/whitby-leisure/199-steps/.
4. **Quayside:** 7 Pier Road, Whitby. http://www.quaysidewhitby.co.uk/.
5. **The Black Horse Inn:** 91 Church Street, Whitby. http://www.the-black-horse.com/.

Leonard Lee is a freelance lighting cameraman. Visit his website here: http://www.leonardlee.co.uk/.

When Leonard is not behind a camera he likes researching the places and stories behind Bram Stoker's famous novel, Dracula and this has taken him to London, Whitby and Transylvania. He lives in Hampshire, UK.

Leave a Reply

1. **Vila Wolf**
July 24, 2016 at 3:35 pm

While I know it's not /thee/ copy that Leonard is looking for, the book, An Account of the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, is available for free in digital format on Google Books, as well as several other sites. As always, quality does vary widely with these digitizations depending on the care taken at the time. But yeah. It's not the copy that Bram thumbed through, but it's also good to know that enough copies have survived to be digitized.

Vamped is a general interest non-fiction vampire site. We publish interviews, investigations, lists, opinions, reviews and articles on various topics.

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The Secret History of Holywell Street: Home to Victorian London's Dirty Book Trade

publicdomainreview.org

The PUBLIC DOMAIN REVIEW

A project of the Open Knowledge Foundation

Victorian sexuality is often considered synonymous with prudishness, conjuring images of covered up piano legs and dark ankle-length skirts. Historian Matthew Green uncovers a quite different scene in the sordid story of Holywell St, 19th-century London's epicentre of erotica and smut.

(Tentative warning: the essay includes some mildly explicit content, both text and image, which may not be suitable for all ages and dispositions!)



19th-century "French postcard" from the personal collection of the German-Austrian psychiatrist and early sexologist Richard Freiherr von Krafft-Ebing — Source .

At the eastern end of the Strand, opposite the Royal Courts of Justice, William Gladstone stands atop a plinth. Four times Queen Victoria's Prime Minister, this eminent, emblematic Victorian is flanked by four female effigies testifying to the virtues of education, inspiration, courage and brotherhood. Gladstone himself looks stately and solemn, as is fitting, but also mildly outraged, all clenched fists and frowns.

Well might he: he's staring straight down what was, in his day, variously described as "a foul sink of iniquity", "a place where dirt and darkness meet and make mortal compact" and, in the words of *The Times*, "the most vile street in the civilized world". This was Holywell Street, the meridian of London's booming pornography trade and, throughout the century, a byword for the dirty book trade long before Soho. It was the very antithesis of the noble and apparently rock-solid values embodied by Gladstone's effigy companions and an affront to his own Christianity, which saw him scouring London's streets late at night to rescue fallen women.

Today, the street has vanished. If you rest your back against Gladstone's plinth and look down the Strand you have colossal Australia House in front of you; the grimy Church of St Mary Le Strand a little further down, lost amidst swirling tides of traffic; and to your right, dreary Aldwych curving towards Holborn. But from exactly the same vantage point in Gladstone's day the scene would have been very different: two narrow, rambling streets squirrelling into the distance: one, to the right, Wych Street; the other, tucked directly behind the Strand, Holywell Street.

If, when it comes to the pleasures of the flesh, we are accustomed to think of the Victorians as a prudish and repressed breed, a trip down Holywell Street in the late nineteenth century would be an eye-opening experience. It was unusual in appearance. There were crooked timber-framed houses with gables lurching over the street, blocking out the light, as though caught in a time-warp from medieval London. In some senses this gave it an antique, picture-postcard charm. But many of the old wooden-fronted, deep-bayed buildings were grimy and semi-dilapidated – sleazy, even. Books abounded, stuffed into sooty shop-windows, spilling onto trestle tables on the pavement, and being forever unloaded from horse-drawn carts. Above one second-hand book shop, at number 37, was a



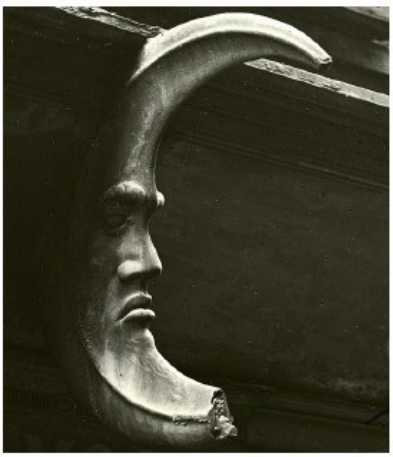
Photograph looking west from the Church of St Clement Danes with Holywell Street to the left and Wych Street to the right — Source .

golden crescent moon with pouting lips, thick eyebrows, a fine nose, and sad, sulky eyes – reportedly the oldest shop sign in London, one that features prominently in contemporary paintings. It guarded the entrance to Half-Moon Passage, a dark alley reeking of urine, down which pedestrians could see swarms of vehicles and people on the Strand, framed in a piercingly bright aperture as though caught in the lens of a camera obscura.



Painting of a picturesque-looking Holywell Street from 1864 by Thomas Shepherd. Note the bulging bay windows, overhanging storeys and the olden sign of the golden crescent moon — Source .

Situated on the cusp of Fleet Street, the nerve-centre of the biggest publishing industry in the world, Holywell Street was originally the terrain of radical pamphleteers and print-makers. But following a government crackdown on subversive print in the 1810s, maverick publishers diverted their revolutionary impulses from radical politics into lucrative pornography, and the street became a powerhouse of the dirty book trade.



A closer look at the sulky crescent moon above number 37 Holywell Street, one of the oldest shop signs in Victorian London. It can still be seen in the Museum of London — Source .

One denizen of Holywell Street was William Dugdale, one of the most prolific publishers of dirty books. He was a wily man, full of subterfuge. Some of his favourite tricks included passing off very old books as brand new simply by changing the title, or sometimes claiming new books were vintage, giving them an unjustified kudos. He also liked to rip chapters out of other people's books and pass them off as original short works, add racy and suggestive subtitles to completely innocent novels, and write his own advertising copy, praising the brilliance of works he had himself written.

In 1857 the government passed the Obscene Publications Act, threatening pornographers with ruinous prison sentences and transforming Holywell Street into a wellspring of illicit erotica. Dugdale had to operate under at least four fake names and from several different addresses. He had managed to evade custodial sentences for some time (brazenly threatening a jury with a knife at one point) but a decade later, his luck ran out. Finally convicted, he died a lonely death in the Clerkenwell House of Corrections in 1868 having received a sentence of hard labour which, at his age, was tantamount to a death sentence.

But in spite of the draconian law, shopkeepers proved resourceful and Londoners could still find, dotted among the clothes-men's stalls and the more respectable second-hand bookshops, dollops of pornography. "At present the sale of [illicit books and prints] is only partially suppressed", declared the authoritative *Survey of London* in 1878. Of a typical day on Holywell Street, there would have been swarms of men — sometimes women too — hovering outside certain shop windows and occasionally vanishing inside to sink their teeth into the forbidden fruit of Victorian London. Suggestive title pages and obscene engravings in the window were indicative of a pornographic presence within. A mid-century *Daily Telegraph* article decried members of the weaker sex "furtively peeping in at these sin-crammed shop windows, timorously gloating over suggestive title-pages, guiltily bending over engravings as vile in execution as they are in subject".



A crowd of shoppers pore over the "sin-crammed shop windows" of Holywell Street in the late 19th century. Note the antiquated half-timbered buildings lurching over the street — Source .

And what kind of scene would have greeted customers? A dark and musty interior. The obligatory quotient of youths snout-deep in greasy books, a faint sheen of perspiration on their upper lips. A hawker arriving every so often to buy or sell. The shopkeeper eying each new customer with suspicion lest they were an undercover policeman, the bane of their existence.

Say you visited in the 1890s, staring down at you would be a range of titillating titles like *The Power of Mesmerism: A Highly Erotic Narrative* (1891), *The Seducing Cardinal* (1830) and *The Lustful Turk* (1864). You might also find, a little further into the shop, *Captain Stroke-All's Pocket Book!* (1844), *An Experimental Lecture by Colonel Spanker* (1878) and *The Amatory Experiences of a Surgeon* (1881). Customers wouldn't want to miss, either, *The Autobiography of a Flea* (1887) and *Revelries! and Devilries!!* (1867). The latter has a lascivious frontispiece showing two naked women with birches ready to lash a pair of bare buttocks.



No orifice is wasted in this charming depiction of a drawing room gang-bang from The Autobiography of a Flea (1887) — Source .



A friendly catch-up (with mass masturbation) from The Autobiography of a Flea — Source .

To get hold of the most illicit publications, a discreet word with the bookseller might have been necessary, and even then it may have depended on whether he was on good terms with the porn king of the day. Some, like *The Story of a Dildoe!* – privately printed in 1880, obscenely illustrated (you can imagine how) and limited to a print run of 150 – were very rare, passing from hand to hand much like illuminated manuscripts in medieval London. Others, like *Randiana, or Excitable Tales; Being the Experiences of an Erotic Philosopher* (1884), were so salacious they were kept behind the counter. In this,

readers are treated to a potpourri of sexual encounters featuring orgies, ecclesiastical buggery, and lesbian sex scenes complete with gutta-percha dildoes brimming with warm oil and milk.

We know about these books which were readily available in Holywell Street thanks to the existence of the first pornographic bibliography in the English language, which can stake a claim to being one of the most thrilling – and longest – bibliographies ever compiled. It was published in three parts in the 1870s and 1880s by pornography connoisseur Henry Spencer Ashbee under the pseudonym Pisanus Fraxi. Ashbee was the biggest collector of pornography in nineteenth-century Europe; he would have been on first-name terms with many of the booksellers of Holywell Street. The first volume of his bibliography, published in 1877, is called the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* mocking the Catholic Church's Index of Banned Books and fittingly so, for most of the works featured were printed privately or secretly – they were just the kind of books the police would destroy. The word bibliography doesn't really do justice to the originality and brilliance of Ashbee's endeavour. Part précis, part review, part critical analysis with absurdly long footnotes giving it an illusory academic quality belying the sheer filth of many of the titles, it was patently designed to stimulate as much as to inform, and is striking testimony to late Victorian London's booming pornography industry.

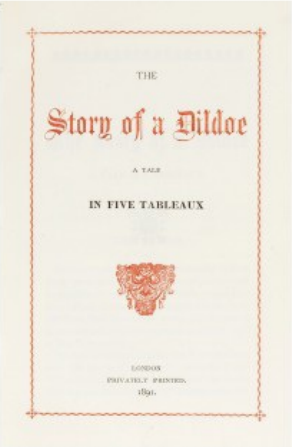


Frontispiece to Catena Librorum Tacendorum (1885), the third and final volume of Henry Spencer Ashbee's superb pornographic bibliography — Source .

The kinds of books available on Holywell Street, as listed by Ashbee, range from the fairly innocuous to the downright obscene. Ashbee describes *An Experimental Lecture by Colonel Spanker*, for instance, as "the most coldly cruel and unblushingly indecent of any we have ever read". It is a sadistic account of the whipping of a young girl for the edification of the Mayfair Flagellation Society. The passages in which the victim is tied up, whipped, and penetrated tread a thin line between masochistic sex and outright assault. The self-avowed theme of the colonel's live-action lecture was "the pleasures to be derived from crushing and humiliating the spirit of a beautiful and modest young lady". Flagellation looms large in Victorian erotica as though a fitting punishment for protagonists so flagrantly breaching the moral codes of society.

Another striking book – not least because the writing seems so modern – is *The Horn Book, or A Girl's Guide to the Knowledge of Good and Evil* (1899). Like much erotica, it takes the form of a dialogue, in this instance between a bored housewife, Maud, and her sexual tutor, Charlie, a "brilliantly healthy" and libidinous 28-year-old, and is at once a tale of sexual awakening and a vivid sex manual for practical use. It is divided up into instructive sections on the male and female sexual organs, intercourse, masturbation, sodomy, "gamahuching" (oral sex) and of course "how to fuck without danger of fecundation". Charlie and Maud demonstrate sixty-three different sex positions including "dog-fashion flying", "the sack of corn backwards", "the cock horse", and "the elastic cunt". It contains some great pillow talk. "I should like, my angel," says Charlie, "to crush my whole being into your sweet body; in your velvet mouth; your pretty rose-pink cunt; your delicious chocolate bum-hole, and I would squirt therein countless jets of thick, rich seed".

In other books, it is the woman who is the sex monster, reflecting the traditional idea that women were intrinsically more lustful than men. *The Delights of Love* takes a "female rake" as its protagonist, an Italian widow who gives free reign to her passions and perversions after the welcome death of her impotent husband, and in *The Story of a Dildoe!*, "three young American ladies resolve to procure a dildo for their mutual gratification … then they all meet and deflower each other with this ladies' syringe".



Title page to an 1891 edition of The Story of a Dildoe! — Source .

If this veers into lesbian territory then *The Sins of the Cities of the Plain* (1881) is one of the first pornographic work to focus exclusively on male homosexual experience in which hardly anything is left to the imagination. At no point in this work – or in any of the works mentioned above – are the sexual escapades of the protagonists frowned upon; even the most depraved form of sexual activity is presented as licit, open-minded, and liberating, and the pacey, picaresque style in which many of them are written is suggestive of a certain playfulness and harmlessness much at odds with mainstream attitudes towards casual sex. Colonel Spanker, in his sordid lecture, invokes the Garden of Eden to prove that "a luscious indulgence in the arts of love" is the most natural thing in the world despite being "condemned by a hypocritical world as wicked and obscene".

As this suggests, the Victorian establishment hailed pornographic books as evil incarnate, a corrosive threat to the very fabric of society. Ashbee describes society as being "at war" with the books; in 1856 *Punch* magazine wishes Holywell Street would be swallowed up by an earthquake; and one police inspector thought the "blackguard purveyors" of Holywell Street should be "taken and nailed by the ears to the nearest gatepost". We have already noted too the deadly sentences meted out to some of the principal pornographers.

To understand why erotic novels engendered such outrage, we need to get our heads around Victorian sexuality. Male readers: imagine thinking of your body as a physiological economy with a finite amount of resources to "spend" (the most commonly used word for ejaculation in this era). Imagine being taught that every youthful sexual indulgence is an unmitigated evil which wastes your vital force and stunts your physical growth and mental development. Any kind of incontinence is dangerous, you believe, but none more so than masturbation, which will lead to jaundiced skin, eruptions of acne, a slouching gait, clammy palm, leaden eye, and the inability to look anyone in the eye. The fate of a compulsive masturbator is to become a drivelling idiot or insufferable hypochondriac. Even within the presumed safety of marriage, you will have to walk a tightrope between abstemiousness and gratification — have no sex, and you'll be ruined, but have too much and you'll melt into a goo of despondency as the symptoms of "spermatorrhoea" (an umbrella term for diseases caused by a loss of semen) take hold, leading to heart disease and death.



"Representing the last stage of mental and bodily exhaustion from Onanism or Self-pollution", a coloured engraving from The Secret Companion, a Medical Work on Onanism (1845) depicting the deleterious effects of self-love stemming from a wanton waste of semen — Source: Welcome Library .

It's even worse for women. Female readers, imagine thinking of yourself as a sexless baby-producing machine, almost entirely devoid of any erotic desire and actually incapable of it during pregnancy when your baby will suck away your vital force from within. You will surrender to your husband's desires only occasionally. Like men, you believe that sex serves a practical purpose – the population of the earth – but beyond that is profoundly dangerous. Continence is the key. Your sex life is likely to be a sore and bitter trial.

These ideas, so farcical and objectionable to twenty-first-century eyes, are lifted – sometimes word for word – from Dr William Acton's *Functions and Disorders of the Reproductive Organs* (1857), no radical polemic but mainstream medical opinion. Anyone deviating one iota from his worthy advice (memorably described by historian Steven Marcus in *The Other Victorians* (1966) as "part fantasy, part nightmare, part hallucination") is either indifferent to their health or just plain low. It is only after we get our head around Dr Acton's alien sexual precepts that we can begin to understand the hysterical tone that united police, press, and politicians in lambasting pornography. For Victorian pornography was not just a foil to Dr Acton's belief system but its antithesis, presenting as it does a world of sexual riches where women are game for anything and men are "limitlessly endowed with that universal fluid currency which can be spent without loss", as Marcus puts it. Even Ashbee calls them "poisons" in the preface to his bibliography, warning that they must be distinctly labelled and "confined to those who understand their potency". They were also, of course, an incentive to dreaded masturbation. That is why men like William Dugdale had to be destroyed in hard-labour camps.

The perversions of Holywell Street pornography sometimes spilled over into real life. "This literature amused me much, as did the pictures of fantastic combinations of male and female in lascivious play and coition", writes "Walter", a pornography connoisseur and pseudonymic author of *My Secret Life*. "I began to see that such things are harmless, though the world may say they are naughty, and saw through the absurdity of conventional views and prejudices as to the ways a cock and cunt may be pleasurably employed". *My Secret Life* was an Odyssean sexual memoir privately printed from 1888 and running to 4000 pages across 11 volumes. With its vivid descriptions of deviant sexual behaviour, it reveals that not everyone adhered to middle-class sexual ideals, to put it mildly. The memoir is so frank that a British printer was sentenced to two years' imprisonment for supplying it – in 1969! It still has the power to shock today with sentences like "while I fucked her, I hated her – she was my spunk-emptier" and "her cunt constricted . . . and sucked round my prick from tip to root moistening both itself and occupant, and my sperm shot out and filled it".



A cheerful illustration by French painter and lithographer Achille Devéria, ca. 1840 — Source .



Reluctant lovers in a pornographic postcard from the 1880s — Source .

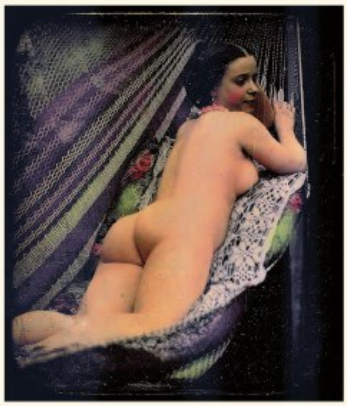
Over the course of a million words, Dr Acton's sexual worldview is capsized. In the text, men can philander away until their hearts' content – they will suffer no adverse effects unless they catch a sexually transmitted disease, which is always a risk for men like Walter. Nor are women passive and sexually submissive in the least; all you need to do, in Walter's world, is fill them up with wine and meat, "let the grub work", and they're anyone's. And they enjoy it, women, as the many sex scenes ram home. Nor are men, contrary to Dr Acton, in their uninhibited state always sex machines. *My Secret Life* addresses the taboo of impotency. "My God! It was not standing, not a bit of swell or stiffness was in it", writes a horrified Walter at one point, finding his genitalia reduced

to "a sucked gooseberry, a mere bit of dwindling, flexible, skinny gristle". Overall, Walter's memoir is a violent reaction against the repressed nature of Victorian sexuality and a striking manifestation of the sort of sexual freedom glimpsed in pornography. The problem, it seems to be saying, lies with society not pornography.

In the later part of the century, if customers wanted to get hold of pornographic prints or even stereoscopic slides (giving the illusion of depth to indecent images), they usually had to have a discrete word with the bookseller. Even then, they were likely to have been treated with suspicion. In 1880, a police inspector went undercover in search of a family-run mail-order enterprise that was corrupting Eton pupils by sending them indecent images unsolicited in envelopes marked "art studies", in the hope that they would order more. The trail led straight to a Holywell Street bookshop. The officer found that risqué photographs could be purchased easily enough but to get his hands on some "choice specimens", as he puts it in his *Stories from Scotland Yard* (1890), the police officer had first to earn the keeper's trust before being led upstairs into "a dirty little place, which was part bed-room, part workshop . . . as filthy a hole as I have ever been into". Here, he purchased some expensive hardcore pornography (for two guineas) – and left a shilling for the "little wretched piece of forlorn humanity" that was the shopkeeper's baby. The pornographer's suspicious wife followed him to the train station. The next day, the shop was raided, 5000 indecent photographs seized, and the man arrested. He was given two years' imprisonment and the inspector rejoices in ending his "revolting trade".



Erotic illustration by Achille Devéria, ca. 1840 — Source .



Hand-coloured erotic photograph, ca. 1855 — Source .

If the sight of the pornographic prints and slides aroused customers, they could walk to the end of Holywell Street and double back into Wych Street. In appearance, it was similar to Holywell Street: grimy, narrow and with gables toppling over the street, but here many of the buildings were brothels – some flagellation brothels. Holywell Street was not known for its houses of ill repute but many of its chemists stocked sex toys.

In spite of repeated police and government crackdowns, the pornographers of Holywell Street proved resilient. Every time one head honcho of the porn trade was arrested, another simply popped up in his place; the street's shopkeepers were ever alive to the enormous commercial potential of smut. It began to look like the only way to suppress Holywell Street for good was to wipe it off the map. There had in fact been, throughout the course of the nineteenth century, a series of proposals to demolish Holywell Street and Wych Street, ostensibly to make the Strand wider and grander — it could become horribly congested between the churches of St Clement Danes and St Mary le Strand. But the prospect of exterminating the pornography trade gave the proposals added

piquancy.

And, right at the end of the nineteenth century, that is exactly what happened. By 1901, both Holywell and Wych Street would be gone, flattened to make way for soulless Aldwych, which was completed just after the First World War. London's pornography trade didn't vanish with them of course; its centre of gravity simply shifted to the other end of the Strand, to Charing Cross Road, which became the new nucleus of erotic books, and, after that, to Soho where sex book shops can still be found to this day.

Historian and broadcaster **Dr Matthew Green** is the author of the critically-acclaimed *London: A Travel Guide Through Time*, out now in Penguin paperback. He also runs six-week evening courses on the history of London in Pimlico.

Public Domain Works

- *The Lustful Turk, or Lascivious Scenes from a Harem* (1828), by Anonymous.
  - Horntip
- *The Amatory Experiences of a Surgeon* (1881), by James Campbell.
  - Horntip
- *Randiana, or Excitable Tales* (1884), by Anonymous.
  - Horntip
- *The Autobiography Of A Flea* (1887), by Anonymous.
  - Wikisource
- *My Secret Life* (1888), by Walter (AKA Henry Spencer Ashbee).
  - Free Info Society
  - Horntip
- *The Story of a Dildoe* (1881), by Anonymous.
  - BNF
- *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* (1877), by Henry Spencer Ashbee.
  - Horntip
- *Centuria Librorum Absconditorum* (1879), by Henry Spencer Ashbee.
  - Horntip
- *Catena Librorum Tacendorum* (1885), by Henry Spencer Ashbee.
  - Horntip
- *The Functions and Disorders of the Reproductive Organs in Childhood, Youth, Adult Age, and Advanced Life* (1875 edition), by William Acton.
  - Internet Archive

Further Reading

London: A Travel Guide Through Time (*Penguin UK, 2016*)

by Dr Matthew Green

Described by the Telegraph as "fascinating" and by the *Londonist* as "easily the most engaging social history of London for a decade", let time traveller Dr Matthew Green be your guide to six extraordinary periods in London's history — the ages of Shakespeare, medieval city life, plague,

coffee houses, the reign of Victoria and the Blitz – in this thrilling and vibrant history.

The Other Victorians: A Study of Sexuality and Pornography in Mid-Nineteenth-Century England (*Transaction Publishers, 2008*)

by Steven Marcus

A startling and revolutionary perspective on the underside of Victorian culture: a history of the authors, the audience, and the texts of Victorian writings on sex in general and of Victorian pornography in particular.

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Mormon leader thinks Joseph Smith's 'seer stones' were real because the iPhone exists

rawstory.com

Sarah K. Burris
27 Jun 2016 at 11:38 ET



Dieter F Uchtdorf (Photo: Facebook)

Founder of the Mormon church, Joseph Smith, used what he called a "seer stone" to derive mystical information and supernatural knowledge. When the angel Moroni showed Smith the golden plates, according to the story in the *Book of Mormon*, Smith was unable to read the gold plates because he didn't speak the "reformed Egyptian" language. Lucky for Smith, the "seer stones" he named "Urim and Thummim" magically enabled him to translate the 116-page book.

Mormon leader Dieter Uchtdorf serves as a "Second Counselor in the First Presidency" in the church, and while the story of Smith may seem farfetched, he says he can prove it is true, because a "seer stone" is basically the same thing as an iPhone.

"I can get the collected knowledge of the world through a few little inputs," Uchtdorf wrote as a description on a Facebook photo of him holding up his iPhone. "I can take a photo or a video with my phone and share it with family on the other side of our planet. I can even translate anything into or from many different languages!"

Uchtdorf believes that if he can do so many amazing things with his smartphone, which wasn't announced by Apple CEO Steve Jobs until 2007, then surely God gave Smith his own smartphone in 1823 to read the secret golden plates. "If it is possible for me to access the knowledge of the world through my phone, who can question that seer stones are impossible for God?" he asked.

Like many religions, the "seer stones" tell a story about a sacred object to their faith, much in the same way the Virgin Mary's breast milk is said to have sprayed from a statue to St. Bernard's mouth.

Unlike the "seer stones," however, Bloomberg reports that Apple spent $2.6 billion in research and development from the moment they began work on the iPhone until it was released. Most of the company's focus was spent on developing the iPhone.

No information is available on the cost or acquisition of Smith's "seer stones."

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Man who spent seven years in jail awaiting murder trial sues city, Louisville police

Saturday, July 16 2016 10:32 PM EDT wdrb.com

Posted: Jul 15, 2016 1:08 PM PDT Updated: Jul 16, 2016 5:00 AM PDT
By Jason Riley

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (WDRB) -- A Louisville man who spent more than seven years in prison awaiting trial for murder, rape, sodomy and kidnapping, among other charges, before having all of his cases dismissed, has filed a federal lawsuit claiming he was framed by several police officers.

Percy Brown, who was arrested in 2008 in connection with a 2004 shooting that killed 19-year-old Jennifer Nicole French, claims Louisville Metro Police officers "fabricated" evidence and then piled on additional "false charges" to keep him behind bars.

Brown and his attorneys argue he was "deprived of his liberty" and improperly incarcerated just the same as if prosecutors had "secured a wrongful conviction."

The murder case, in which police believed Brown shot and killed French because she was scheduled to testify against him in a fraud case, was dismissed last year. Prosecutors could not locate key witnesses, according to court records.

Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney Jeff Cooke, a spokesman for the Jefferson Commonwealth's Attorney's Office, said an "essential witness" could not be located and prosecutors asked a judge to postpone the case. When the judge denied the request, Cooke said prosecutors had no choice but to ask that the case be dismissed.

"It was dismissed not because of any weakness in the case," Cooke said. "We anticipate this case could be re-indicted and prosecuted in the future."

But Chicago Attorney Elliot Slosar said in a statement that Brown was more than 70 miles away gambling at a casino when French was murdered. And he said there are Casino records, attached to the lawsuit, that prove it.

Prosecutors have said the records only prove that someone using Brown's casino card was there.

The statement also says there were "multiple eyewitnesses" to the French murder and other people were identified as suspects but police "ignored" that evidence to "frame" Brown.

In addition, separate rape and sodomy cases have been dismissed. Prosecutors said they were unable to locate witnesses in those cases, according to court records.

Brown was released from jail in April.

"Mr. Brown suffered a true injustice as he languished inside of a jail cell for nearly eight years because Louisville police officers kept fabricating evidence to keep him there," Slosar wrote in a press release.

The lawsuit seeks damages for malicious prosecution and fabrication of evidence against several Metro detectives and a University of Louisville Police Officer, Jerry Jewell. The LMPD officers named are: Michael Smithers, Kristen Downs, Roy Stalvey, Brian Kurigan, Keith Roberts, Gary Alcorn and David Sandford.

In addition, Lt. Barry Wilkerson, the former commander of the homicide unit, and his successor, Lt. Todd Kessinger are accused of negligent supervision and failure to intervene.

A police spokeswoman deferred to the Jefferson County Attorney's Office for comment. The County Attorney's Office does not comment on pending litigation. Metro Government is also named as a defendant in the lawsuit, filed in U.S. District Court.

Brown's murder case was pending for so many years, in part, a judge and prosecutor have said, because Brown has chased away multiple lawyers, firing some and threatening to kill others, repeatedly delaying the trial.

In total, Brown went through at least eight attorneys in the murder and other pending cases.

Brown denied that he threatened his attorneys, claiming Judge McKay Chauvin was "biased, unprofessional and reckless," according to court records.

Because of what Chauvin called Brown's "consistently irrational behavior," the judge ordered he be examined to see if he was competent to stand trial, according to court records.

Brown was found competent.

Brown's sister, Vanessa Kelly, has told WDRB in the past that her brother was not guilty and had been locked up for years awaiting trial while prosecutors and defense attorneys conspired against him.

"I know he is not guilty," she said. "He is not capable" of murder.

WDRB.com • 624 W. Muhammad Ali Blvd
Louisville, KY 40203

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blogspot.com

http://mysteriousplanchette.blogspot.com/2016/06/high-scared-communications-seybert-dial.html?spref=fb

Mysterious Planchette

brandon@mysteriousplanchette.com

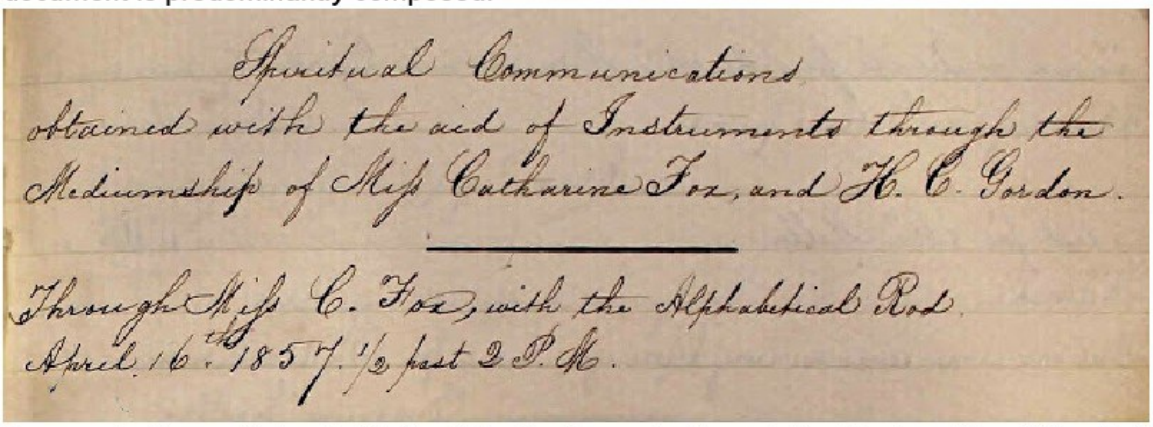
Tuesday, June 14, 2016

"High & Sacred Communications": The Seybert Dial Trials, 1857

"Do not the dry bones rattle now?"

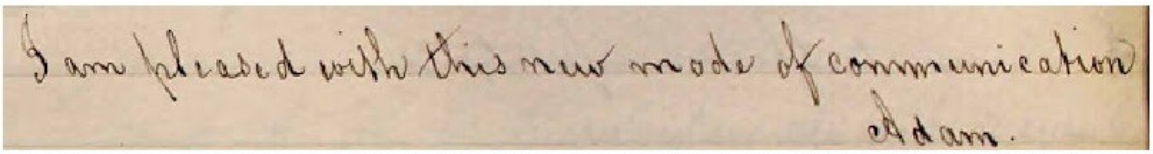
This was the inquiry said to have been put forth by none other than Shakespeare, on July 21, 1857, through a previously-undiscovered array of alphabet dials and spirit communication devices invented, used, and refined by Philadelphia philanthropist Henry Seybert, most famously know for the namesake endowment that would sponsor the Seybert Commission 30 years hence. Check that date again--that's 1857--*less than a decade* out from the birth of Spiritualism, and in the earliest years of the appearance of mechanical alphabetic séance apparatus. For our game, that's *eeeeeaaarly*.

The excerpt appears in an incredible séance journal recently uncovered by my friends and colleagues John Buescher and Pat Deveney of IAPSOP at the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts at the Van Pelt-Dietrich Library of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, and is part of the Seybert Commission collection there. It is now part of IAPSOP's Ephemera Wing, along with partial transcripts I made of the device-relevant passages, of which the document is predominantly composed.


Spiritual Communications
obtained with the aid of Instruments through the
Mediumship of Miss Catharine Fox, and H. C. Gordon.

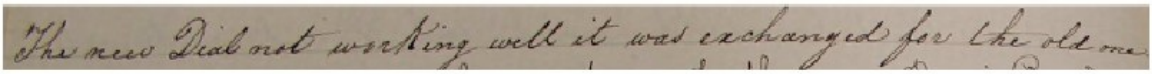
Through Miss C. Fox, with the Alphabetical Rod.
April 16th 1857. ½ past 2 P.M.

Titled "Spiritual Communications obtained with the Aid of Instruments through the Mediumship of Miss Catherine Fox and H.C. Gordon," the journal dates from April-September, 1857, and consists of 72 pages of séance transcripts describing Seybert's efforts to test and refine a series of very early spirit communication devices with the aid of several mediums -- Kate Fox, H.C. Gordon, and S.B. Brittan among them. The transcripts record the communications of these mediums, guided by the spirit of Henry's deceased father, famed chemist and Congressman Adam Seybert, along with a host of celebrity spirit guides that include Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, Napoleon, and Isaac Newton, as they seek to adjust and refine the apparatus being used to solicit the communications.


I am pleased with this new mode of communication
Adam.

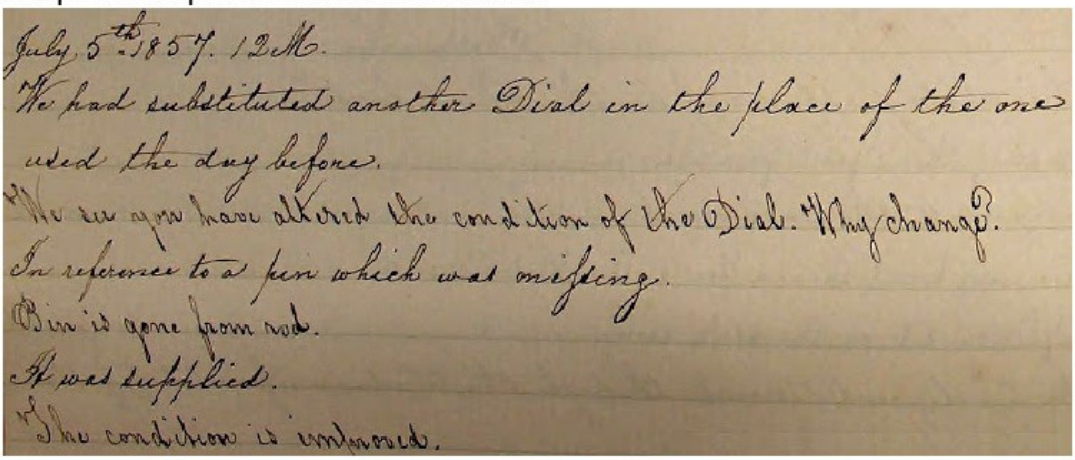
"New modes of communication" is the central focus of the document, and the spirits fluctuate from approval to disapproval of instruments from one séance to the next.

The specific number of devices tested is difficult to determine, though there was at least one "Alphabetic Rod" or "Semicircular Dial" -- a table-mounted, pulley-controlled device that drove a vertical rod to spell out messages, that relied on table-tipping movements to spell out messages similarly to the Spiritual Telegraph Dial of Isaac Pease, which had debuted only a few years prior. They also call to mind other early contrivances, such as those revealed by Emma Hardinge Brittan in Modern American Spiritualism, or even Susanna Moodie's "spiritoscope," which also had a Fox Sister's connection and took place contemporaneously with Seybert's trials.


The new Dial not working well it was exchanged for the old one

Constant improvement and modification of a parade of new and old instruments created for communication makes
determining what's what difficult, as passages like this demonstrate.

Other communication machines mentioned in the transcripts include a "keyed instrument," a "new sliding instrument," a "wooden dial" built by trial participant Mr. Alhauss, a "cog dial" that may have been separate from the Alphabetic Rod, and the vaguely-defined "Telegraph," along with several false starts and discarded devices. Operating in the same time and locale that Dr. Robert Hare performed his famous public trials with his own Spiritoscopes (and who was something of a rival of Seybert's in his early chemistry career, a profession he gave up on after receiving his father's substantial inheritance), the transcripts of Seybert's trials provide a window into the early evolution of alphabetic spirit communication devices.


July 5th 1857. 12 M.
We had substituted another Dial in the place of the one used the day before.
We see you have altered the condition of the Dial. Why change?
In reference to a pin which was missing.
Pin is gone from rod.
It was supplied.
The condition is improved.

A new day, a new dial. It has a pin, and a rod, and an alphabet, and that's about all we know!
As linked above, IAPSOP has both photofacsimile images of the original journal, and my own notes and transcribed excerpts from that journal. I discovered when transcribing the document that Seybert italicized his own inquiries to the *right*, and the spirits' answers to the *left*, so that might help

you make more sense of it if you read it for yourself. And I DO encourage you to investigate this amazing document for yourself, as it is an incredibly fascinating perspective into some of the earliest experiments in mechanical spirit communication in existence, and well worth the effort. Let me know what you discover!

Posted by Brandon Hodge at 12:27 PM

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Shetland pony broke into pub, got drunk and had to be coaxed out with bar snacks

metro.co.uk

Simon Robb for Metro.co.ukThursday 28 Jul 2016 2:13 pm



Shetland pony broke into pub, got drunk and had to be coaxed out with bar snacks

The pony got tipsy on stray pints left by punters (Picture: SWNS)

A horse walked into a bar, the barman said 'why the long face?'.

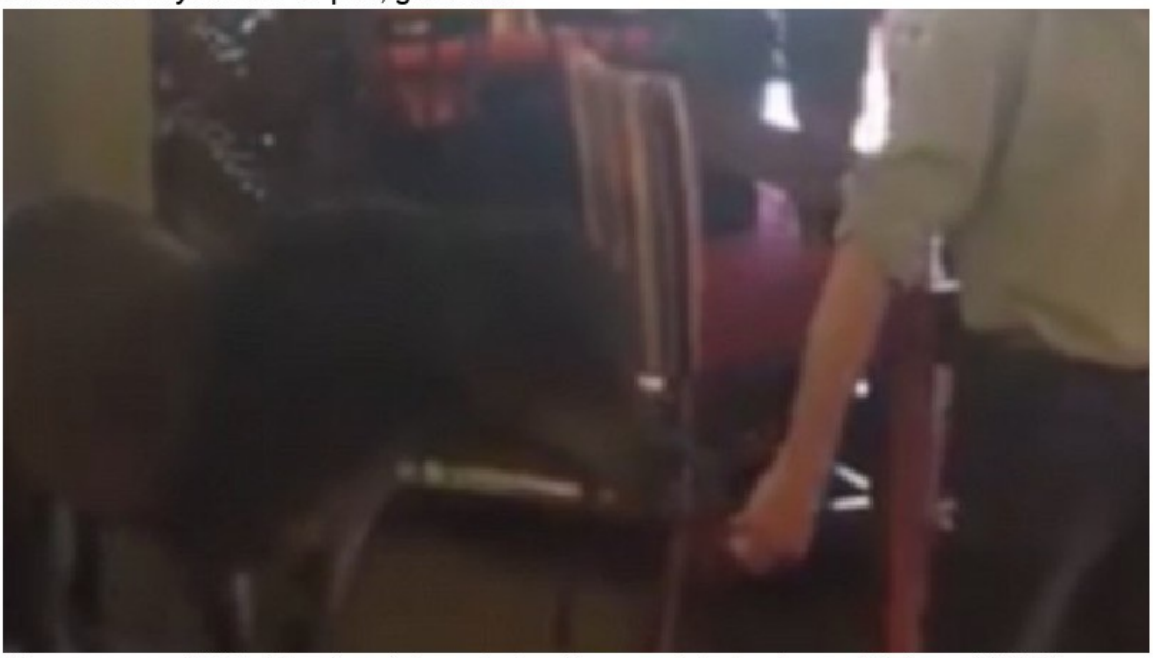
A Shetland pony went into a bar, did a bit of a minesweep, got drunk, and had to be coaxed out using pub snacks.

A four-legged opportunist named Mocha, snuck inside The Ascot Arms in Gravesend, Kent for a triple before the pub opened for business on Monday.

Pub owner, Mihaly Herczeg, had to use crisps, pork scratchings and carrots to coax the pony back into the garden after finding him guzzling a few pints.

The 53-year-old said although the pony usually drinks water, it would probably develop a taste for beer and apple cider given the chance.

Shetland Pony broke into pub, got drunk



The pony snuck into The Ascot Arms before it opened for business (Picture: SWNS)
The animal then helped itself to alcohol left out (Picture: SWNS)
The owner had to lure it back outside with bar snacks (Picture: SWNS)







He said: 'Mocha lives in the garden but he managed to sneak in through the back door.

'He is not a big drinker but he does walk around like he's a bit drunk but he is very friendly and likes meeting new things and people.'

Pub regulars have a soft spot for 12-year-old Mocha, who has managed to sneak into the pub twice since his owner bought him five years ago.

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The Sinking of the Mary Rose | Historic Mysteries

historicmysteries.com

Historic Mysteries

Doug MacGowan June 9, 2016
Unexplained Mysteries

Most people, when thinking about King Henry VIII of England, think of his obesity, the number of his wives, and his being the first head of the Anglican church. But his earlier life showed him as a warrior king, frequently in battle with England's enemies. He was also a (not always successful) military strategist who led campaigns and armies into foreign countries in hopes of expanding his realm.



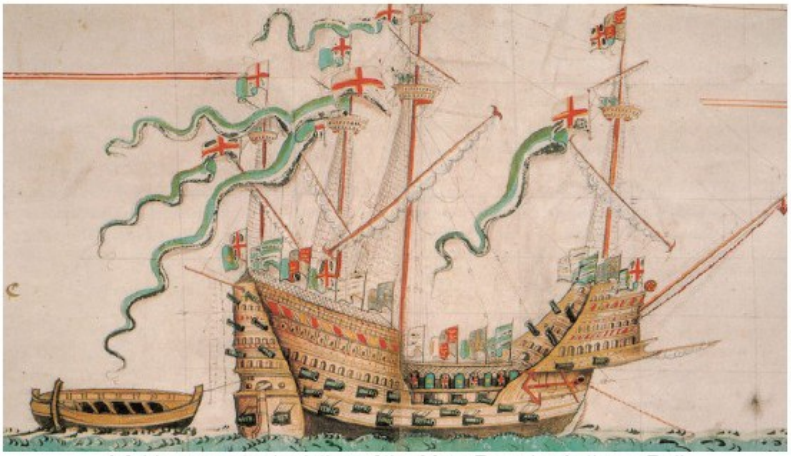
A 1509 painting of Henry VIII. The year he became king.

When he started his reign in 1509, he inherited a few military ships and a few more commercial ships that could be changed into warships in case of battle. Henry felt that this was not enough and began to build a navy of ships that could go to war with enemies, mainly the French.

CONSTRUCTION

The first two new warships constructed specifically for battle were the Peter Pomegranate and the Mary Rose. Popular theories about the naming of the ships state that the former was named for Saint Peter and the Aragon queen Catharine (whose badge featured a pomegranate) and the latter named either after Henry VIII's sister Mary Tudor or named after the Virgin Mary.

The Mary Rose may have been initially mentioned in a 1510 document outlining the payment for a large ship of "400 tons", or in a later document which states that Henry VIII paid for moving the ship to London from its construction site in Portsmouth.



A fairly accurate depiction of the Mary Rose by Anthony Roll.

The new fleet was under the command of the Lord High Admiral, Sir Edward Howard. After Henry's establishment of a naval presence, there were now almost 20 warships and crews that added up to over 5,000 sailors of differing rank.

In 1512, Howard led the ships to the area of Brittany in France, where they easily defeated the local military and resulted in the British soldiers capturing 12 enemy warships and the pillaging of the area once the English

had landed.

In another skirmish in 1513, the fighting at sea began anew, with Lord Admiral Howard boarding an enemy ship but falling overboard and quickly drowning due to the heavy armor he was wearing.

SINKING OF THE MARY ROSE

But the crucial event and mysterious episode of the Mary Rose took place during the 1545 Battle of the Solent (a stretch of sea near the Isle of Wight just south of England). On the night of July 18, 1545, King Henry VIII turned over the command of his navy to a seaman by the name of George Carew. Carew soon took the fleet near the Isle of Wight and encountered French ships.

He went into battle.

The fact that the Mary Rose sunk during that battle is not disputed. The reason why, however, is the topic of debate that goes on to this day. The official website of the Mary Rose Trust states that the Mary Rose's demise may have been due to four reasons (although a combination of them could also have been the cause).

- The Mary Rose could have doomed itself by having unskilled seamen on board that didn't correctly maneuver the ship during the battle with the French. Human error could also have caused the sinking by insubordination or mistaken judgement about the strength of the French fleet.
- Some theorists believe that the weather may have caused the ship to sink. Surviving eyewitnesses claim that a sudden strong wind may have struck the sails at just the right angle to turn the ship over. This wind could have been a contributing factor to the sinking.
- The ship could have had too heavy a load of cannons and sailors. Also, it seemed that the cannons' ports were open in preparation for attack and if the ship leaned too far to one side, water would have come rushing through those openings and sunk the ship.
- Probably the most common sense theory, but which was later disproved, is that the French weaponry sunk the ship, and a perhaps overly-patriotic French calvary officer did state officially that the Mary Rose was struck by enemy fire and damage to the ship was severe enough to take the Mary Rose under.

All but approximately 35 of the 400-man crew died when the ship sank.

DISCOVERY OF THE MARY ROSE

The wreck of the Mary Rose would be discovered 426 years later in 1971 by undersea exploration. It showed no sign of being hit by enemy fire, opposing the theory that the ship sank after being hit by French warships.

The remains of the ship were brought on shore and are now the feature of a museum in Portsmouth, the city that built it. It has now come full circle.

Sources:

"Mary Rose" Wikipedia, pulled 6/7/16 The Mary Rose Trust website, pulled 6/7/16

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Recovery of the Mary Rose wreck as it clears the water in 1982. Image: the Mary Rose Trust [CC BY-SA 3.0]

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Skydiver leaps from 25,000ft with no parachute - live on TV

02:15, 31 Jul 2016 Updated 08:56, 31 Jul 2016 By Claire Rutter , Sam Webb , John Rogers

mirror.co.uk



A skydiver has leaped out of a plane at 25,000 feet without a parachute to land safely in the California desert.

American Luke Aikins, who had more than 18,000 jumps, made history by becoming the first person to leap without a parachute and land in a net instead.

After a two-minute freefall, Aikins landed dead centre in the 100 x100ft net at the Big Sky movie ranch on the outskirts of Simi Valley, California.

As cheers erupted, Mr Aikins quickly climbed out, walked over and hugged his wife Monica, who had been watching from the ground with their four-year-old son Logan and other family members.

Aikins used a 'mystery device' to make his perilous descent, shown during a live television broadcast dubbed "Heaven Sent".



Getty

He did it! Skydiver Luke Aikins lands safely after jumping 25,000 feet from an airplane without a parachute



Fox

Aiken speaking before he leapt from 25,000ft with no parachute

Before the stunt it was claimed the married 42 year-old third-generation skydiver, who has made about 18,000 jumps in his 25-year career, used only air currents and 'nothing but the clothes on his back'.

"I'm almost levitating. It's incredible, this thing that just happened," Luke said after making the "perfect landing.

"The words I want to say I can't even get out of my mouth," he told Fox Carolina.

Luke Aikens mid-way through his jump

Aikins revealed just before climbing into his plane that the Screen Actors Guild had ordered him to wear a parachute to ensure his safety.

He said he considered pulling out at that point because having the parachute canister on his back would make his landing in the net far more dangerous. If he had to wear it he said he would not bother to pull the ripcord anyway.



Fox

"I'm going all the way to the net, no question about it," he said from the plane. "I'll just have to deal with the consequences when I land of wearing the parachute on my back and what it's going to do to my body."

A few minutes before the jump, one of the show's hosts said the requirement had been lifted. Aikins left the plane without the chute.



Getty

Skydiver Luke Aikins lands safely in the 'trap'



Getty

Skydiver Luke Aikins celebrates with son Logan after breaking the record

He jumped with three other skydivers, each wearing parachutes. One had a camera, another trailed smoke so people on the ground could follow his descent and the third took off an oxygen canister after they got to an altitude where it was no longer needed.

Then the others opened their parachutes and left him on his own.

"Whenever people attempt to push the limits of what's considered humanly possible, they're invariably described as crazy," said Aikins before the jump.

"But to me, this jump is simply the next logical step in a lifetime of extreme challenges."



Getty

Skydiver Luke Aikins lands safely after jumping 25,000 feet from an airplane

He was due to land on his back on equipment which organisers would only describe as a 'slide'.

Aikins, who claims it will be a world record for jumping without a parachute, previously worked with Felix Baumgartner on the Austrian daredevil's 2012 record skydive which started 24 miles above the earth.



FOX



FOX

American Luke Aikins will use a mystery device to make his perilous descent
The Daredevil has made about 18,000 jumps in his 25-year career

Aikins has done movie stunt work for blockbusters like Godzilla and Iron man 3, serves as a safety and training advisor for the United States Parachute Association (USPA), and provides advanced skydiving training to elite military special forces.

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This Perfume Could Make You Smell Just Like A Comet

huffingtonpost.com

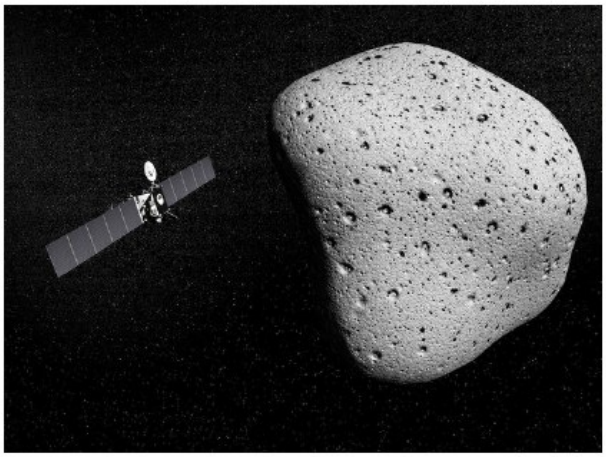
The bad news is, a comet smells like cat pee.

06/24/2016 05:14 pm ET

- Hilary Hanson Viral News Editor, The Huffington Post

A perfume that smells like a comet is a poetic-sounding idea. Who doesn't love the image of a big dusty space snowball careening through the skies?

Unfortunately, comets don't smell as ethereally lovely as one would hope. Scientists discovered in 2014 that at least one comet — 67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko— gave off an odor reminiscent of rotten eggs, horse poop, ammonia (read: cat pee) and formaldehyde.



Elena Duvernay/Stocktrek Images via Getty Images
Rosetta probe and comet 67P Churyumov-Gerasimenko.

But that didn't stop members of the Rosetta mission team — the people responsible for landing a probe on the comet — from asking UK-based scent firm The Aroma Company to make a perfume based on the comet's fragrance.

New Scientist reporter Jacob Aron had the misfortune of testing out the new perfume. He described it as having a "sharp, unpleasant scent" that he could feel "as a physical presence inside my skull." As he smelled more and more, however, Aron started coming around to the scent, writing that it's "not actually as foul as my first impression led me to believe" and that he could even detect "a few floral notes." Either that, or the horrible stench was just starting to make him delirious.

Unfortunately — or maybe fortunately? — the fragrance doesn't appear to be available commercially at this point. The Rosetta team will be handing out postcards with the scent at London's Royal Society Summer Science Exhibition in July.

Since we haven't sniffed this stuff ourselves, we'll have to hold further judgment. But really, could it be much worse than perfume that smells like zombies?

H/T Gizmodo

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The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh (RCSEd) Library and Archive

The Society of Barbers Archive (1722-1922)



Barbers Chest presented to the Society of Barbers in 1724 (currently on display at Surgeons' Hall Museums)

The Society of Barbers archive (1722-1922) has now been catalogued and is available on the Archives Hub here. (The catalogue will also soon be available through our online catalogue on the Library website, which is currently being upgraded). The preservation and cataloguing of the archive was made possible through generous funding from the Wellcome Trust.

The Barbers of Edinburgh

In 1505 the surgeons and barbers of Edinburgh jointly appealed to the Edinburgh Town Council for incorporation. This was granted on July 1st 1505 and the Seal of Cause subsequently ratified by King James IV in October 1506. Despite having practised the craft of surgery for centuries, from this date barbers were expected to pass examinations in anatomy and surgery if they were to continue undertaking their trade in Edinburgh and its suburbs of Canongate, Leith and Portsburgh. With the dual examination, barbers could become dually-qualified practitioners in the trades of surgery and barbery, and also members of the Incorporation of Surgeons and Barbers of Edinburgh.



Apprentice barbers operating in Edinburgh, 1722 (SB 2/1)

Over the course of the seventeenth century splits formed between the 'simple barbers', 'barber-chirurgians' and 'chirurgians'. Despite a long association, the barbers would feel increasingly marginalised, with their privileges and scope of work curtailed by the surgeons, including office-bearing in the Incorporation and their barbering restricted to the suburbs. The surgeons would formally strengthen their position in 1694 when the terms of the Seal of Cause were redefined. This new ratification, being confirmed in Parliament in 1695, gave the surgeons "full power over all persons exercising surgery, pharmacy or barbery within the bounds of the city of Edinburgh". Moreover, whereas the barbers had previously held the same rights of surgeons, they were now ignored completely in favour of the

apothecaries, thereby creating the 'surgeon-apothecary'. As such, the barbers had no say in the administration of the Incorporation, nor were they entitled to benefit from fees they contributed as members. Further, in order to enable entrepreneurial surgeons to have the monopoly of offering barbering services as well as surgical treatments in the city centre, the 'simple barbers' were frequently brought before the courts for practising outwith their jurisdictions in the suburbs, with some even finding themselves in Edinburgh's Tollbooth Jail.

Resentments caused by loss of control through unequal division of governing power climaxed in 1722; the Barbers formally separated from the Incorporation by decreet of the Court of Session. That same year the Society of Barbers of Edinburgh was formed (sometimes known as the Corporation of Barbers).


Decreet: Barbers od Edinburgh against the Chirurgeons, 1722 (SB 7/1)

The Archive

The Society of Barbers was wound up in 1922 when the Archive came to the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh. The collection provides good coverage of the activities of the Society and the work of barbers operating in Edinburgh. Of particular interest are records relating not only to the role the Society played as charity givers, through the Trades Maiden Hospital for instance, but also those that illuminate the precarious lives led by some barbers and their families, particularly the widows of former barbers. A further highlight are the papers revealing the continuing tensions between barbers, hairdressers and wigmakers, particularly those who established barber shops without formal training.

The archive comprises:

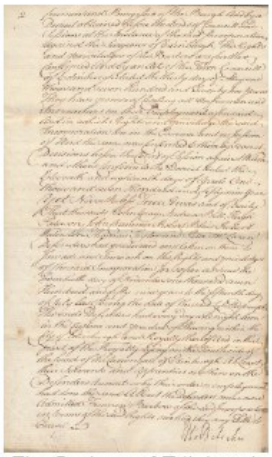
SB 1: **Laws and Acts of Dean of Guilds and Town Council of Edinburgh** (1722-1846); SB 2: **Minutes** (1722-1922); SB 3: **Accounts and financial papers** (1727-1922); SB 4: **Indentures** (1805-33); SB 5: **Admissions** (1735-84); SB 6: **Correspondence (**1758-1859); SB 7: **Litigation** (1722-1829); SB 8: **Petitions to the Society** (1827-28); **Petitions for charity to the Society and Trades Maiden Hospital** (1763-1922); SB 9: **Searches for incumbrances** (1780-1859); SB 10: **Inventories of Writs** (1728-1851); SB 11: **Title deeds** (1721-1853); SB 12: **Business papers** (1730-c.1922); SB 13: **Miscellaneous** (c.1722, 1830).

Please note, for extensive archive material relating to the pre 1722 activities and relationships between the surgeons, barbers, barber-surgeons, apothecaries and surgeon-apothecaries, please see the main Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh institutional archive (catalogue ref: RCSEd). which will soon be available.

+



The Barbers of Edinburgh against the Wigmakers of Edinburgh, 1761



The Barbers of Edinburgh against the Wigmakers of Edinburgh, 1761

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Something nasty in the nursery: the truth behind nursery rhymes

wordpress.com

https://hauntedpalaceblog.wordpress.com/2016/01/20/something-nasty-in-the-nursery-the-truth-behind-nursery-rhymes/

The Haunted Palace

Something nasty in the nursery: the truth behind nursery rhymes

20*Wednesday*Jan 2016

Posted by Miss_Jessel



Image: public domain(?)

We all grow up learning nursery rhymes but how many of us know of the darker, underlying meanings behind some of our most popular and seemingly innocent poems. I remember asking my mother to sing "*Seesaw Margery Daw, Johnny shall have a new master, He shall earn but a penny a day, Because he can't work any faster*" not knowing that we were actually laughing about child slave labour in workhouses[1].

Nowadays we have only to open up a newspaper or turn on the television to be confronted with images or articles on social inequality, religious intolerance or political discontent but go back six hundred years and it was a whole different ballgame. It is nearly impossible to stop people from venting their grievances especially when faced with deep injustice but fear of the consequences did shape how they expressed them. One such way was through the composition of punchy verses which on the surface seemed nonsensical but which often contained hidden or barely veiled criticism of prominent figures or institutions which if expressed openly could have had serious repercussions for the teller such as loss of status, property, goods, freedom or life.

Nursery rhymes also served another purpose, the catchy tunes were easy to remember and enabled a largely illiterate population to learn and pass on stories from generation to generation creating and expanding an important oral tradition.



Ballad singer. image source unknown.

The meanings of some nursery rhymes were ascribed in the nineteenth century; others have verified historical roots whilst the origins of many have been lost due to the passage of time. Despite the disputed background of some of the rhymes, what is not in doubt is that nursery rhymes are one of the most fascinating but neglected body of work in the English language.

Sinister undertones: A look at four nursery rhymes

Ba Ba Black Sheep

Bah, Bah, a black Sheep,
Have you any Wool?
Yes merry have I,
Three Bags full,
One for my Master,
One for my Dame,
One for the Little Boy
That lives in the lane

(First written version known from *Tommy Thumb's Pretty Song Book*, c.1744)

This popular nursery rhyme has suffered a bit of a black lash in recent times. In the 80s and 90s the rhyme was under attack by critics who accused it of having racist connotations. Despite the rhyme's supporters calling it political correctness gone mad, many groups jumped on the bandwagon insisting that the word 'black' should be

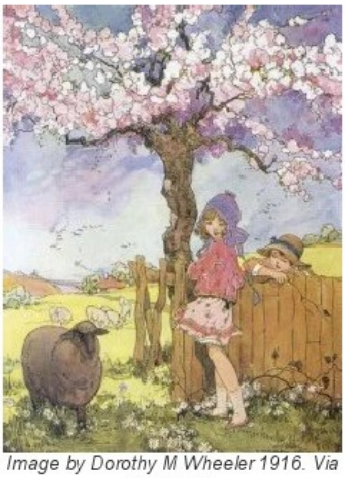


Image by Dorothy M Wheeler 1916. Via Wikimedia.

replaced with other adjectives such as little, big, hopping, pink and happy[2].

In actual fact the poem has no connections with racism at all but is believed to refer to the Great Wool Tax of 1275 which saw the crown for the first time implement a taxation system on what had been up to that point free trade. Wool was probably the most important commodity exported in England at that time and the tax would have dealt a serious financial blow to the small tenant farmers and merchants. The tax per sack of exported wool was set at 6s 8d and the property confiscated of anyone found evading the charge[3].

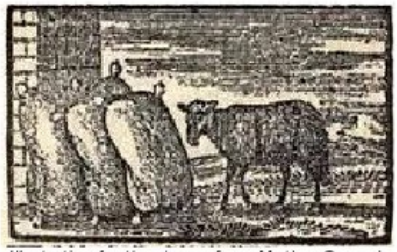


Illustration for the rhyme from Mother Goose's Melody, first published c. 1765

In the rhyme 'master' refers to the tax given to the king and 'dame' to the church. Experts disagree with whether 'black' wool was a positive or negative term, as on one hand black wool could not be dyed and so limited its market but on the other hand it had value as it could be made into made into clothing or furnishings immediately without the need for the lengthy dyeing process. The last line refers to the small amount of money (i.e. about 1/3 of the overall profits) that was left for the farmers or shepherds. Interestingly in the second edition of the book the line changes with the message showing even more clearly how dire the situation was for the small cottage industries at that time *"But none for the little boy who cries in the lane"* ***[4]***.

Mary, Mary Quite Contrary

Mary, Mary quite contrary,
How does your garden grow?
With silver bells and cockle shells
And pretty maids all in a row.



Queen Mary I

Although the precise meanings of some of the lines are disputed it is generally accepted that the rhyme is about Mary Tudor, Queen of England and her reign, which left a trail of blood and fear throughout England. Some experts believe that '*quite contrary*' is an allusion to her reversal of the political and religious changes brought in by her father and brother whilst '*pretty maids*' is a reference to the execution of Lady Jane Grey. '*How does your garden grow*?' is either a mocking reference to Mary's inability to have children or else alludes to the graveyards '*garden*' full of murdered Protestants. Given the subject matter of the next line, the latter interpretation seems more likely as 'silver bells' is a pretty way of describing thumbscrews whilst 'cockle shells' are instruments of torture which were attached to male genitals[5].

Lucy Locket

Lucy Locket lost her pocket,
Kitty Fisher found it;
Not a penny was there in it,
Only ribbon round it.

The rhyme refers to a famous argument between two 18th century prostitutes whose spat became the talk of the town and added to Kitty Fisher's notoriety as one of the most popular, beautiful, desirable and wealthy courtesans in London society[6].

Lucy Locket worked as a barmaid/prostitute in London and on finding out that her lover '*pocket*' had lost all his money, dropped him. Despite having been the one to end the relationship, Lucy became incensed on finding out that the popular courtesan Kitty Fisher had taken up with him despite his reduced circumstances. Kitty claimed that she had found him with a ribbon tied around him which was a serious jibe at Lucy since prostitutes kept their money tied around their thigh with a ribbon. Lucy's anger may have been largely to do with jealous. Kitty



Lucy Locket. Image source unknown.

being able to take a poor lover was showing London and other women in her profession how financially secure she had become as now she could choose lovers based on her own inclination rather than money.



Kitty Fisher by Joshua Reynolds via Wikimedia.

Kitty Fisher (born Catherine Marie Fischer) had a number of influential suitors, was a leader of fashion and was painted several times by Sir Joshua Reynolds. In 1766 she married John Norris, the son of the MP for Rye and moved to his house in Hemsted. Unfortunately she died only four months later, aged 25 from either from smallpox, consumption or poisoning from lead based makeup[7].

Jack and Jill

Jack and Jill went up the hill to fetch a pail of water
Jack fell down and broke his crown
And Jill came tumbling after.



Jack and Jill. Source unknown.

The small village of Kilmersdon in Somerset claims to be the site of the true story of Jack and Jill. According to local legend in 1697 a young unmarried woman 'Jill' fell pregnant. The father of the baby 'Jack' was soon after killed by a rock from Badstone Quarry and 'Jill' died not long after she gave birth to her son[8]. The phrase '*a pail of water*' is an old idiom meaning to have sex. The village to commemorate the story has introduced an annual race whereby contestants must run up to the top of the local hill with an empty bucket of water, fill it up and run back down to the school. The winner is the contestant which has the maximum amount of water still left in their bucket[9].

Even though I would love this story to be true, it is generally agreed that the Jack and Jill in the rhyme are King Louis XVI and his wife Marie Antoinette who were beheaded during the French revolution in 1793.



Marie Antoinette and Louis XVI (or perhaps it's Sue Perkins and Giles Coren)

To make the rhyme more suitable for children another verse was added '*Up got Jack, and home did trot, As fast as he could caper, He went to bed and bound his head, With vinegar and brown paper*'.

Little Jack Horner, a coffin pie and the dissolution of the monasteries

One of the most fascinating nursery rhymes in my opinion is that of Little Jack Horner. Who was Jack Horner? Why was he sitting in the corner? And what is so exciting about pulling out a plum?

The ridicule of Ambrose Philips

In 1725, the satirical poet Henry Carey published the following version of *Little Jack Horner* in his Namby Pamby ballads.

"Now he sings of Jackey Horner
Sitting in the Chimney-Corner



Little Jack Horner. Source: Pinterest.

Eating of a Christmas pye,
Putting in his thumb, Oh fie!
Putting in, Oh fie! his Thumb
Pulling out, Oh strange! a Plum[10]"



Alexander Pope by Johnathan Richardson (public domain?)

The '*Little Jack Horner*' that Carey is mockingly referring to is Ambrose Philips, a popular poet and Whig politician. Philips born in 1674 in Shrewsbury spent most of his early career as a fellow at St John's College, Cambridge before his poems collectively called the 'Pastorals' were published in 1710[11]. High praise of Philips' work and comparisons to Edmund Spenser angered other leading poets of the time in particular Alexander Pope who believed that Philips' success was due to his obsequious behavior towards his wealthy patrons rather than to talent. The war of words which erupted between Pope and Philips reached such heights that Philips threatened to hit Pope with a rod he kept hung in Button's Coffee House. Samuel Johnson described relations between the two men as '*perpetual reciprocation of malevolence*'[12].

The use of a nursery rhyme with which to ridicule Philips was particular apt as Philips' was well-known for composing childish verses to flatter and please his sponsors' children. The fact that Carey italicized the original words clearly indicates that people were already very familiar with the rhyme. So the question remains if '*Jack Horner*' was not Ambrose Philips then who was he?

What's in a name?



Knave of Spades. V&A collection.

In early tales and nursery rhymes roguish, vagrant and ne'er-do-well characters were often called *Jack*. A Jack or Knave is also the name of a playing card. The Collins dictionary gives a number of different definitions for the word knave including a deceitful dishonest person; a rogue or rascal and; a male servant. It can't be a coincidence then that the *Jack* of the nursery rhyme was believed to have been based on a devious male servant whose behavior helped to bring about the downfall of a well-respected abbot and the destruction of one of the last monasteries of Tudor England.

Many people believe that *Jack Horner* was in fact Thomas Horner, the steward of Abbot Whiting of Glastonbury. The story goes that the abbot had sent Horner on a mission to see King Henry VIII in London, the aim of which was to try to save Glastonbury Abbey from being dissolved. Feeling hungry on the journey, Horner, who had been sent on his way with a pie, decided to eat a piece of it. To his surprise instead of pulling out the mince filling he pulled out a deed to one of Glastonbury's smaller properties. On examining the contents of the pie he found a further eleven deeds concealed inside. Keeping the first deed, he delivered the other papers to the king[13]. The abbot was caught in a no-win situation as he could not accuse Horner of theft because then he would have to openly admit to trying to bribe the king giving Henry an easy excuse to charge the abbot with corruption. Horner gained the deeds to the estate of Mells Manor in Somerset where his descendants lived until the beginning of the 20th century[14].

***"Take a Legge of Mutton, and cut the best of the flesh from the bone, and parboyl it well then put to it three-pound of the best Mutton suet and shred it very small; then spread it abroad, and fashion it with Salt Cloves and Mace"*[15]**

The quote above is taken from a 1615 recipe for mince pies. The recipe goes on to instruct the reader to place the mixture in a coffin or divers coffin before baking. The coffin is in fact a dough crust in the shape of a basket

or box which was several inches thick and had been cooked for several hours. The coffin was inedible and acted as a container and cooking vessel to keep the meat tender by preventing the juice meat dripping away[16]. Due to the sturdy nature of the pies, people often hid valuable objects such as jewellery, money and important papers in them to stop their possessions falling into the hands of robbers. Therefore it is highly plausible that the deeds to the Glastonbury properties would have been hidden in a mince-pie.

It is also interesting to note that mince pies were considered symbols of Catholic idolatry and were banned under Oliver Cromwell. It was believed that the coffin pastry represented Jesus' crib!

Glastonbury Abbey: The last monastery of Somerset

"I wish to create a church so beautiful that it would move even the hardest heart to prayer" (unknown architect of Glastonbury abbey)[17]



Glastonbury Abbey. Image from Wikimedia.

The Benedictine abbey of Glastonbury in Somerset was believed to have been founded in the 7th century by King Ine of Wessex and later expanded by St Dunstan in the 10th century[18]. By the 16th century the magnificent abbey of Glastonbury had become the largest and second wealthiest abbey in England with its estates covering a large swathe of Somerset, a community of 100 monks and an important centre of learning for the sons of nobility.

In 1525 Cardinal Wolsey with the permission of Henry VIII ordained Richard Whiting as Abbot of Glastonbury. Contemporary records show that Whiting was well-respected, held in high esteem and considered a good and honest manager. For the first few years, the abbey and its monks lived in peace and security but with the chaos caused by Henry's attempts to divorce Catherine of Aragon and break away from the authority of Rome, Whiting knew that it was only a matter of time before Glastonbury would be under attack[19].



Thomas Cromwell by Hans Holbein the Younger.

Despite the 1535 *Suppression of Religious Houses Act* which dissolved the lesser monasteries, for a while Whiting felt safe. Henry repeatedly assured Whiting that the abbey would be spared, a belief strengthened by Richard Layton's inability to find any evidence of mismanagement in the abbey's accounts. By 1539 Glastonbury was the only abbey left in Somerset. In September of that year, Cromwell demanded that the abbey be surrendered to him. Whiting refused. In response Layton, Richard Pollard and Thomas Moyles on Cromwell's orders closed the monastery and the 78-year-old Whiting sent to the Tower to be personally examined by Cromwell.

The Fall of the Abbot of Whiting

"Whose soul god pardon" (Pollard, Royal Commissioner on the death of Abbot Whiting)

The precise charge on which Whiting was arrested has never been known but on the 25 October 1539, Marillac, the French Ambassador wrote

"*The Abbot of Glastonbury…has lately, been put in the Tower, because, In taking the abbey treasures, valued at 200,000 crowns, they found a written book of arguments in behalf of queen Katherine*"[20]

Although Whiting was condemned by an Act of Parliament as a traitor to the crown, his fate was already sealed. Whiting accompanied by Pollard returned to Somerset to face trial. On the 14th November, Whiting was sentenced by a jury on the trumped-up charge of '*robbing Glastonbury Church*'. It is interesting that the jury contained none other than his former steward, manager of the household, keeper of the abbey's accounts and collector of taxes, Thomas Horner. The following day, Whiting along with two of his monks, John Thorne and Roger James were tied on hurdles and dragged by horses up to Glastonbury Tor where they were hung, drawn and quartered. Whiting's disgrace did not end there. His head was fastened over the west gate of the town and his limbs exposed at Wells, Bath, Ilchester and Bridgwater. Even at the end, Whiting never admitted to treason

and died a dignified and humble death asking for mercy from god and forgiveness from the king and all men (even those whose actions had led him to the gallows)[21]. After the abbot's death Glastonbury Abbey was finally destroyed and its stones used for building material.



Quartering a body. Source: Fr Wikimedia.

As with all sites with a traumatic history, Glastonbury is believed to have its own share of ghostly residents. Many of the sightings have links to the abbey these include the ghost of an important monk who has been seen at the abbey; '*a mad monk who is said to wander the ruins muttering to himself*' and the kind spirit of a monk known as Friar Francis who remains on the site of the former leper hospital where he worked. The George and Pilgrim Hotel is the residence of two ghost lovers, a lady and a monk whose unconsummated love has condemned them to wander the corridors of the pub for all eternity. Lastly the ghost of Richard Whiting has also been seen on a number of occasions on Dod Lane making his final, tragic journey towards Glastonbury Tor[22].



Glastonbury Tor. Source Wikimedia.

The enigmatic 'Little Jack Horner'

The descendants of Thomas Horner have always denied the accusation that their ancestor obtained the rights to the Mells Manor estate by dubious means and there is solid evidence to support their claims. The original conveyance still survives which records Thomas Horner's purchase of the deeds from Henry VIII at a high valuation which is confirmed by John Leland who visited Horner in 1543 on behalf of the king[23]. Also another rhyme has been discovered referring to the change of hands of the property,

"Hopton, Horner, Smyth and Thynne
When the abbots went out, they came in" ***[24]***

There is even evidence of a Little Jack Horner rhyme being known as early as 1390 and connected to a location in Barnet long before the Horners of Mells enter the picture[25]. If this now seemingly pro-catholic/anti-protestant verse was not originally written to condemn the actions of Henry VIII and Thomas Horner we will never know who the first Jack Horner really was and what the rhyme was about. It is remarkable how six lines of what on the surface is a childish and simple rhyme has been imbued with such deep historic significance and for me the speculation is absolutely fascinating.

Notes

[1] Seesaw Marjorie Daw Rhyme, http://www.rhymes.org.uk/seesaw_marjory_daw.htm

[2] Ba, Ba, Black Sheep, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baa,_Baa,_Black_Sheep

[3] Sheep in the Cotswolds: The Medieval Wool Trade, Derek Hurst

[4] 10 sinister origins of nursery rhymes: http://listverse.com/2012/11/28/10-sinister-origins-of-nursery-rhymes/

[5] 10 sinister origins of nursery rhymes: http://listverse.com/2012/11/28/10-sinister-origins-of-nursery-rhymes/

[6] Kitty Fisher and Lucy Locket:Tawdry Origins: http://persephonemagazine.com/2012/05/kitty-fisher-and-lucy-locket-tawdry-origins/

[7] Kitty Fisher, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kitty_Fisher

[8] The dark side of nursery rhymes: http://www.bbc.com/culture/story/20150610-the-dark-side-of-nursery-rhymes

[9] Jack and Jill Dash, http://www.kilmersdonvillageday.co.uk/jackjilldash.html

[10] Nursery rhymes from mother goose: http://nurseryrhymesmg.com/rhymes/little_jack_horner.htm

[11] Ambrose Philips: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ambrose_Philips

[12] Ambrose Philips: http://www.nndb.com/people/862/000097571/

[13] Little Jack Horner: http://www.rhymes.org.uk/little_jack_horner.htm

[14] Mells Manor House: http://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1000442

[15] Gervase Markham, *The English Housewife*, (1615)

[16] The history of pies http://www.everythingpies.com/history-of-pie/

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[19] Richard Whiting (abbot): https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Whiting_(abbot)

[20] Once I was a clever boy: http://onceiwasacleverboy.blogspot.co.uk/2010/11/blrichard-whiting-abbot-of-glastonbury.html

[21] The Execution of Richard Whiting: http://clasmerdin.blogspot.co.uk/2011/11/execution-of-richard-whiting.html

[22] Halloween: The Ghosts of Glastonbury http://www.centralsomersetgazette.co.uk/Halloween-Ghosts-Glastonbury/story-20007779-detail/story.html

[23] Mells Manor House: http://www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1000442

[24] Fairy Tale Origins: http://mythsweliveby.tumblr.com/tagged/Long_reads

[25] Mells village: http://nurseryrhymesmg.com/rhymes/little_jack_horner.htm

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Fairy Tale Origins: http://mythsweliveby.tumblr.com/tagged/Long_reads

Mince Pies: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mince_pie

1 thought on "Something nasty in the nursery: the truth behind nursery rhymes"

1.

Lenora *said:*

January 20, 2016 at 5:55 pm

Miss Jessel, thanks for another excellent and thoroughly researched post. I have always been intrigued by the origin of nursery tales. From what I have been reading recently some research has traced the origins of some of them back to the bronze age. Amazing stuff.

Blog at WordPress.com. The Chateau Theme .

Sheryet-Mehyet: Southern Seminary's Skeleton In The Closet

wfpl.org

ByAshlie Stevens
August 2, 2016

In April 1896, an article ran in the Western Recorder, the Kentucky Baptist Convention's weekly newspaper, titled: "A Mummy of an Egyptian Princess." The piece gave a detailed description of a sarcophagus that had been recently excavated from a tomb outside Thebes — one that had been given a "certificate of it genuineness and history" by the great Egyptologist Heinrich Karl Brugsch.

Several months later, it arrived on the doorstep of Louisville's Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, where it was — for the better part of 120 years — a literal skeleton in the closet.

It's pretty detailed — though not as elaborate as more iconic archaeological finds like King Tut. The wooden panel over the face features a gold mask with delicate features. There are extensive hieroglyphics covering the lower portion.

Adam Winters is an archivist at the James P. Boyce Centennial Library, where the sarcophagus is now on display.

"We've not been able to decipher all of [the hieroglyphics], but a number of them we have been able to talk about," Winters says. "We know that it identifies the person inside as Sheryet-Mehyet, which means the 'child of the goddess Mehmet.'"



Courtesy Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

Front view of the mummy case

It was determined that the mummy inside was once a priestess who lived around 700 B.C.

Winters says the Seminary's relationship with Sheryet-Mehyet (which has, over the years, been affectionately referred to as "Sherri") began back in 1896 — several months before the Western Recorder article.

That year, Pastor Thomas Treadwell Eaton of Walnut Street Baptist Church — which at the time was the largest Baptist church in Louisville — took a tour group to the "ancient lands." It was an extensive trip that covered portions of Europe, Palestine and Asia, before the group finally ended up in the Egyptian city of Luxor.

"Once there, he had an opportunity to buy the mummy," Winters says. "I don't know how these things necessarily work. It sounds like an 'Indiana Jones'-type of story."

But Winters does have a guess.

On that trip was a well-to-do woman by the name of Sarah Julia Smith. She was the widow of J. Lawrence Smith, an esteemed chemist and deacon at Walnut Street Baptist.

"I'm guessing she had the financial backing to secure the purchase," Winters says.

Eaton wrote in the Western Recorder that he envisioned using the mummy to illustrate "the religion and burial customs of the ancient Egyptians."

Sheryet-Mehyet was the first Egyptian mummy in Louisville; it was displayed at the seminary's old downtown location. Then-hotep, the Louisville Science Center's mummy, arrived in 1905 and was subsequently damaged in the 1937 Flood.

"Fortunately, our mummy was high and dry when the flood came," Winters says, as the seminary had moved away from the river to its current Crescent Hill location in 1926.

But according to campus lore, it wasn't always kept in pristine museum conditions. The mummy has been stored in closets, professors' offices, and allegedly (though Winters can't confirm this) even in the cafeteria.

"It just kind of resided in different places," Winters says. "I've seen pictures of it in its old space, just kind of standing straight-up, leaning against a wall you might say."

Winters says regardless of being kept in some less than secure places, the sarcophagus is in pretty good condition. It has just a few minor dings from being moved.

In 1961, seminary faculty decided to remove the upper portion of the case and unwrap the mummy's face. It was then displayed in Norton Hall, one of the campus buildings, alongside other historical objects.



Courtest Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

The mummy of Sheryet-Mehyet after faculty removed the top portion of the sarcophagus and unwrapped its skull.

There are photos in the school archives that show the top of the sarcophagus suspended from a wire above Sheryet-Mehyet's bare skull. It was a popular exhibit for visitors for a while, but when the mummy was moved into its current library location in 2008, faculty made the decision to re-wrap the body and put the cover back on.

Winters says that while the sarcophagus is relatively tucked away and doesn't garner much attention from current students, he passes the Sheryet-Mehyet every day.

"I mean, I don't know Sheryet-Mehyet would have thought that she would end up in a Baptist seminary — Baptist didn't even exist then — in Louisville, Kentucky, on display where people could look at her," Winters says.

He continues, pointing to the sarcophagus: "I don't mean to sound macabre or anything, but death is on my mind a lot. So for me, it's a daily reminder about making the most of the time that I have."

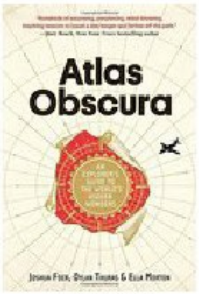
Ashlie Stevens @AshlieD_Stevens

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Speculum Alchemiae

atlasobscura.com



Mini book a30976e9da7a2492

Prague, Czech Republic

Speculum Alchemiae

The hidden lair of an alchemist rediscovered in a 2002 flood.



Secret room furnished with "dragon" **luschippa** (Atlas Obscura User)
The basement labratory alexazul (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)
Alchemists enjoy unusual lighting. petahopkins (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)
Secret room furnished with "dragon" **luschippa** (Atlas Obscura User)
The basement labratory alexazul (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)





Alchemists enjoy unusual lighting. petahopkins (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)
Secret room furnished with "dragon" **luschippa** (Atlas Obscura User)

Hidden in the historical center of Prague you will find a ground floor studio sporting portraits, books and assorted curiosities. The hide of the last black bear to be hunted in the outskirts of Prague lies on the floor. The real treasure is yet to come.

Locate the small statue in the library and give it a twist. A secret door will open down onto a narrow set of stairs, which leads to an underground laboratory sprawling beneath.

This underground space, re-discovered after the massive flood of 2002, contains the equipment and the crucible used (supposedly) to turn lead into gold. A mummified crocodile hangs from the ceiling: the alchemists used to refer to it as a "dragon" to inspire awe in their visitors.

While the museum is a re-creation and the trip through the secret door down into the basement is done with a tour guide it is nonetheless an intriguing journey into Prague's occult history.

This was the place where experiments were conducted, hidden from the eyes of the inquisition: for good measure, a tunnel (the beginning of which is shown during the guided visit) led directly from the laboratory to a safe escape in the woods out of the city... alchemists can never be too careful.

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Society of Paper Money Collectors membership bargain | Coin World

06/01/2016 coinworld.com

Notes aren't so flat after all when presented with a good story

By Gerald TebbenSpecial to Coin World Published : 07/02/16



Durer Vampire lead

The main vignette of the 10,000-mark German "vampire" note of 1922 note is drawn from Albrecht Dürer's circa-1500 "Portrait of a Young Man." Dürer's self-portrait is superimposed at left. The note is referred to as a "vampire" note because, when rotated 90 degrees clockwise, it appears as though a vampire is biting the man's neck, a symbolic reference to World War I reparations sucking the blood out of the nation's economy.

Background note image courtesy of Gerald Tebben.

Coin Lore column from the July 18, 2016, Weekly issue of Coin World:

I'm a coin guy. Paper money always struck me as flat. But that's changing. After seeing researcher Peter Huntoon give a presentation on national bank notes a couple years ago, I joined the Society of Paper Money Collectors.

The first thing I do when the SPMC's *Paper Money* journal arrives is turn to the "Uncoupled" feature by Joe Boling, the American Numismatic Association chief exhibit judge, and Fred Schwan, the force behind MPC Fest.

In the May-June issue, Boling writes about counterfeit chits from a Japanese POW camp on Taiwan, finding obscurity within obscurity. Schwan writes about military payment certificate coupons — coupons that had to be tendered along with MPCs as payment at base exchanges by Korean and Thai solders during the Vietnam War. I now know that blue "han" seals on Taiwan POW scrip are suspect and that the U.S. military used an adjunct to MPCs to thwart black market operations.

The magazine properly has numerous articles about mainstream currency collecting, but it also is sprinkled with sparkling articles from the hobby's side roads.

In the May-June issue, Rick Melamed wrote about the use of postage notes as stamps on letters. Postage notes, the first issue of fractional currency, pictured actual postage stamps on the face.

In time for Halloween last year, Pam and David Stitely wrote about Germany's 1922 "vampire notes." The main vignette of the 10,000-mark note is drawn from Albrecht Dürer's circa-1500 Portrait of a Young Man.

The Stitelys wrote, “When the engraver made the plates, he added extra lines to the neck that resulted in the nickname ‘The Vampire Note.’ When turning the note on its side, you can see a vampire sucking on the neck of the young man. This was to show Germany being sucked dry by the massive reparations” that the Allies imposed after World War I.

Huntoon, who frequently writes for the magazine on mainstream topics, knows a story when he sees one, and every now and then treats readers to a tale.

In last year’s July-August issue, he wrote about “King City, Missouri, Blood Money.”

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High-grade large-size notes of the First National Bank of King City, he wrote, were likely stolen from hoarder Mary Hammer when she was murdered in 1949.

The journal comes with membership in the Society of Paper Money Collectors. In the United States, dues are $20 a year for members who want an online subscription and $39 for those (me) who want a print journal.

Either way, it's a bargain.

Background note image courtesy of Gerald Tebben.

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State Dept Spent $185,000 for One Piece of 'Fiber' Artwork

freebeacon.com



'Lares and Penates' (detail) by Sheila Hicks / Altoon Sultan

BY: Elizabeth Harrington
August 3, 2016 3:50 pm

The State Department doled out six figures for one piece of art made out of balls of thread, to be displayed in an embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan.

Government spending on lavish art has come under scrutiny in recent weeks after a report revealed the Department of Veterans Affairs spent $20 million on artwork while veterans died waiting to see doctors.

The VA is not alone in purchasing pricey art on the taxpayers' dime. The State Department spent $185,000 for "Lares and Penates," a 9.5 foot by 9.5 foot fiber installation by Sheila Hicks, according to a government contract signed in April.

The piece is made up of 98 balls of thread.

"Rather than a sense of constriction, the various sized pieces are like precious small gifts, hiding happy mysteries," writes the art blog "Studio and Garden." "Lares and Penates are Roman deities who protected the household. We might see these small pieces as votive objects, made with a kind of prayerful attention in the repetitive motions of wrapping."

The piece was purchased for the New Embassy Compound in Islamabad, which was completed last summer. The $699 million embassy was built using "green construction techniques," uses low-flow faucets, and is "fully compliant" with the Americans With Disabilities Act.



Another Sheila Hicks yarn installation / John Lord

"The entire building was designed to maximize natural light and minimize the use of electricity throughout the day," said Ambassador David Hale during the dedication ceremony for the building.

The embassy's interest in artwork is not new. Paintings by local Pakistani artist Raja Changez were displayed during its dedication.

Hicks is a contemporary fiber artist from Hastings, Nebraska. She now splits time between Paris and New York. Hicks has work displayed in museums all over the world, including the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, and the Seoul Art Center in Korea.

"Pioneering fiber artist Sheila Hicks blurs the boundary between painting and sculpture with her vibrant woven and textile works, which she creates in many shapes and sizes, from wall mountings that mimic the format of painting to suspended pieces that hang from ceiling to floor like textured columns," writes Artsy, an online database of contemporary art.

Other works by Hicks include "Prayer Rug," a 1969 piece made of wool and mohair, and a hanging installation made of giant balls of colored thread.

Washington Free Beacon

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Stephanie Pistey, Arrested in Boy's Death, Claims She's a Vampire/Werewolf Hybrid

By Matthew Hendley
Wednesday, September 28, 2011 at 10:29 a.m.

browardpalmbeach.com

New Times BPB, LLC



Stephanie Pistey

Stephanie Pistey, 18, is one of five people who have been charged with either murder or accessory to murder in the killing of 16-year-old Jacob Hendershot in Parker, Florida.

She also told a local TV station in a jailhouse interview that she became aware at age 12 that she's a vampire with a bit of werewolf mixed in.

According to Parker police, some of Pistey's friends told Hendershot to come over back in August, and when he showed up, they beat him to death and dumped him in a concrete storm drain.

Pistey is said to be the babysitter of one of the alleged murderers, Tammy Morris, and was watching her two kids in the same house where Hendershot was allegedly being killed.

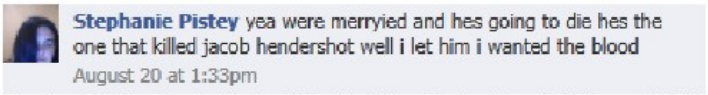
In Pistey's interview with WBBH-TV, she decided to start off by saying that although Hendershot "deserved to get the shit beat out of him," he still didn't deserve to die.

There's no context in the interview as to why she decided to tell the TV station she believed she was a vampire with a touch of werewolf, but she said it with a smile:

"Since I was like 12, every fiber in my body, basically everything -- I know this is going to be crazy -- but I believe that I'm a vampire and part werewolf," she said.

Pistey then denied drinking Hendershot's blood to the news folks but readily admitted to drinking the blood of 25-year-old William Chase, her fiancé/codefendant, at some point in the past.

Then there's what Pistey said about the crime on her Facebook page:



Stephanie Pistey, Arrested in Boy's Death, Claims She's a Vampire/Werewolf Hybrid



Stephanie Pistey, Arrested in Boy's Death, Claims She's a Vampire/Werewolf Hybrid

Pistey told WBBH-TV she plans on staying in jail for the rest of her life. Her bond is currently set at $120,000.

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'I'm part-vampire and part-werewolf': Teenager blames bloodlust for her part in ex-boyfriend's 'murder'

By Daily Mail Reporter 11:27 EST, 28 September 2011
11:27 EST, 28 September 2011
dailymail.co.uk

'I'm part-vampire and part-werewolf': Teenager blames bloodlust for her part in ex-boyfriend's 'murder'

A Florida teen at the centre of a gruesome murder case has revealed her possible bloodlust brought on by the fact she's a vampire and werewolf.

Stephanie Pistey, 18, was arrested earlier this month and charged with accessory to murder in the death of 16-year-old Jacob Hendershot.

Hendershot was missing for weeks before his naked body was discovered in a storm drain in the town of Parker last month.

Scroll down for video

Enlarge



Supernatural: Stephanie Pistey claims in an 18-minute jailhouse interview that she is part-vampire, part werewolf

Cops said the suspects invited him to a home in July and he was killed by Miss Pistey's fiancé and others after she claimed Hendershot raped her.

A police report obtained by the Panama City News Herald said Hendershot's throat was cut and he had been choked to death.

In an 18-minute jailhouse interview with news station WJHG, Miss Pistey revealed her relationship with the victim and the murder suspects.

She said she briefly dated Hendershot after she had broken up with one of the murder suspects, William Chase, but then got back together with Chase and got engaged.

Posts on Pistey's Facebook page prompted questions about whether the suspects were in a vampire cult, but she said it's something else entirely.

Cracking a smile, she said: 'I know this is going to be crazy. But I believe I'm a vampire - part vampire and part werewolf, so it's not really a cult, it's more just like my personality.'

While she refused to speak about the events surrounding Hendershot's murder, she talked at great length about her supernatural background.

'Some people have called me a bavie before - a bio-experiment vampire.'

Miss Pistey claimed she has drunk the blood of her fiancé, 17-year-old Chase, who doesn't share her 'curse.'



Ringleader? Stephanie Pistey knows that she faces a lifetime behind bars, but seems to be OK with it

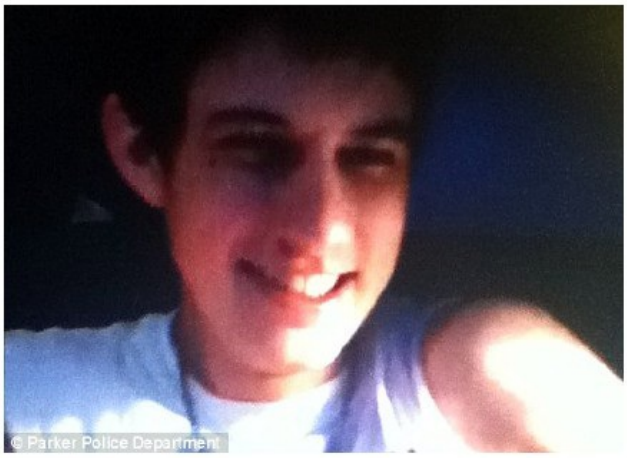
'William is more of a wannabe. I don't even know how we came to like each other.'

Miss Pistey, knows that she faces life behind bars, and said she's OK with it.

She said: 'My dad did say since I was about 10 that I'm going to be in jail, and live in jail and rot in jail.

'Now that I'm here, I'm pretty much figuring out that I'm just going to stay here the rest of my life.'

Hendershot's mother, Nancy Robinson, told the Panama City News Herald that she believes Miss Pistey was the 'ringleader' in her son's death.



Victim: Jacob Hendershot's naked body was found in a storm drain in August, about a month after he had vanished in Florida

Miss Robinson, who lives in the same apartment building as Pistey, said the suspect tormented her about her son.

She told the paper: 'It took all I had to keep from yanking her blue hair out.'

Pistey claims she was present at the time of Hendershot's murder, but not involved. She said: 'I was just the babysitter.'

But her Facebook account tells a different story.

On August 20, days after changing her relationship status to 'engaged,' she posted: 'Yea were merryied and hes going to die hes the one that killed jacob hendershot well i let him i wanted the blood.'

She claimed her account had been hacked.

Watch video here

Comments (23)



The comments below have been moderated in advance.

TonyB, Berlin, 4 years ago

Part vampire and part werewolf.....full idiot.

Polly, Lincs, 4 years ago

Part vampire, part werewolf - 100% mad.

jason, wales, 4 years ago

part idiot more like

Rich, West Islip, USA, 4 years ago

If you truly are a vampire, you piece of trash, then you wouldn't mind receiving a lethal injection for your crimes. Vampires have eternal life, don't they ?

Agent Mac, Western Isles, 4 years ago

"She said: 'My dad did say since I was about 10 that I'm going to be in jail, and live in jail and rot in jail." So rather prove him wrong? who do you think your kidding, other than yourself, with this part vampire, part werewolf story?

Joe, england, 4 years ago

This is what happens when you watch too much twilight.

george , UXBRIDGE, 4 years ago

The power of tv to put strange ideas into the minds of some people should be investigated there seems to be many who are influenced by fiction shown on a screen if there is a film of it some one is sure to copy, that goes for many beliefs now accepted as religions by our police ,seen for the first time in a film mystical religions long dead have been brought to life with no possible way of being true to life its only in the mind of a script writer vampire or were wolf once again fiction but a reality in this girls damaged mind

Sean Boon, Hampshire, 4 years ago

The only thing she has in common with Vampires and Werewolves is that her sanity is a work of fiction too.

Prima, L.A.Calif., 4 years ago

Depending on her age at the time of the murder she could get death,so I wouldn't be so cocky if I were she.But she most likely thinks she can't die(vampire and all).Idiot

Kirstin, Indianapolis, USA, 4 years ago

Wow sounds like a real treat of a girl. Obviously she is delusional and I imagine her story is going to change quickly after she realizes that prison is a miserable place with lots of rules and restrictions.

Then she will pretend to be the victim that was unduly influenced by her boyfriend.

View all

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Stephen Colbert crashed the RNC, insulted Trump, and got escorted off stage

Written by Ashley Rodriguez
July 18, 2016

qz.com

Written by

Ashley Rodriguez
July 18, 2016
Comedian Stephen Colbert kicks off the Republican National Convention with a "Hunger Games"-style prank.

The Republican National Convention, which kicks off in Cleveland, Ohio today (July 18), may have already had its biggest celebrity appearance.

On Sunday, as organizers appeared to be setting up for the event, CBS *Late Show* host Stephen Colbert took the stage at the Quicken Loans Arena—unannounced—and mocked presumptive Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump in an outlandish getup inspired by the *Hunger Games* films.

The comedian began by announcing Trump's pick for the Republican vice presidential nominee, pronouncing that he has "formed an alliance" with Indiana governor Mike Pence, then letting his head droop forward for a few seconds. He quickly apologized, and explained that he had "blacked out there for a moment."

Channeling outlandish *Hunger Games'* emcee Caesar Flickerman, down to the coiffed blue hairdo, and clasping a small furry creature in his hand, Colbert then declared the start of the "2016 Republican National Hungry for Power Games," which is how he refers to the GOP race on his late-night talk show.

> At the center of power at the RNC pic.twitter.com/R8kBtEI7Hq
>
> — Stephen Colbert (@StephenAtHome) July 17, 2016

The stunt lasted less than a minute, as Colbert was then escorted off stage by security, but not before getting in one final jab. "Look, I know I'm not supposed to be up here," he said, "but let's be honest, neither is Donald Trump."

At another point during the day, the talk show host was also spotted donning a patriotic sequin vest and straw boater hat on the convention floor while taping his CBS show, the Associated Press reported.

Speakers including venture capitalist Peter Thiel and Ivanka Trump will be making their way to Cleveland this week for the "Make America Great Again" convention, which runs through July 21. But none of the celebrities lined up so far, including Scott Baio, soap opera star Antonio Sabato Jr., and *Duck Dynasty's* Willie Robertson, are quite as high-profile as Colbert—except, perhaps, the presumptive nominee himself.



Stephen Colbert spotted taping his CBS show at the Republican National Convention. (AP Photo/Matt Rourke)

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Sailors on Shore Leave During the First World War: reinforcing stereotypes of Jack Tar? - Port Towns and Urban Cultures

port.ac.uk

http://porttowns.port.ac.uk/sailors-on-shore-leave/

Port Towns and Urban Cultures
BySimon SmithonAugust 8, 2014



2014-08-05 19.04.02

There remains a stereotypical image of Jack Tar as a man with loose morals who enjoyed himself ashore whenever he got the opportunity. Yet, how far this stereotype stands up has increasingly been questioned by historians.[1] This article does not intend to join in this debate per se but rather to reflect on the stereotype through the spectrum of the First World War and, more importantly, examine what sailors thought by considering their diaries. It is important to remember that, although sailors are primarily considered as existing solely aboard ship, they also existed upon land and interacted with the ports that they visited.[2] Again, this is not an in-depth analysis of all the factors relating to the Jack Tar stereotype and leave in general, but rather an insight into current research.

Shore leave represented a welcome break from disciplined life aboard British warships and the amount of leave granted had steadily increased between the last decades of the nineteenth century and the Great War.[3] However, the declaration of war in August 1914 resulted in the cancellation of leave and lengthy periods spent aboard ship. This affected sailors whether stationed in home waters or across the empire and was a cause for much grievance amongst seamen. Sailors were evidently aware of the time between visits ashore and often recorded in their diaries how long it had been since they last had leave.[4] It is therefore understandable that they occasionally let themselves go, sometimes with a bit too much gusto.

This brings us back neatly to the rowdy Jack Tar stereotype. Interestingly sailor diaries record an increase in the number of accidents when sailors who had been ashore returned to the ship.[5] Although not specifically mentioned, it can be inferred that this was often the result of either drunkenness or ‘skylarking’.[6] But what did Jack get up to ashore? Sadly how they spent their leave is not always well recorded.[7] However, sailors did record in their diaries tales of run-ins with the police/authorities. Walter Dennis noted sailors being reprimanded for ‘interference with the Military Guard’, and looking at diaries from before the war it is apparent that this was not uncommon.[8] Henry Baynham, however, has argued that much rested on residents’ attitudes and that they were less tolerant of ‘feeling[s] of high spirits ashore’.[9]

However, bad behaviour could lead to undesired consequences which impacted on other sailors, not only aboard their own ship but also in harbour. Dennis recorded one such case where men from HMS *Black Prince* caused trouble outside the Governor of Gibraltar’s residence which resulted in shore leave being cancelled for all ships in port and the *Black Prince* being given orders to sail.[10] Dennis was therefore naturally relieved when two weeks later ‘all night leave’ was granted and noted it was ‘much appreciated’.[11] Nevertheless, after this, naval commanders were evidently at pains to try and calm crews before they went ashore and captains ‘advised everyone to uphold the reputation and the good name of the ship ashore.’[12]

On the other hand, it is clear that not all sailors conformed to this stereotype and a number of diaries

dispel the image of drunken sailors ashore, demonstrating the dangers of accepting stereotypes too readily. Edwin Fletcher's diaries, for example, reveal that leave for him meant home to his wife and young daughter. He recorded: 'I met my Darling Wife at Fratton, getting home about 6pm. I enjoyed myself immensely. Time seemed to fly…'[13] Similarly others such as Dennis do not record engaging in any drunken antics either, although their silence does not automatically mean they did not. Instead they recorded what happened to others ashore and are maybe simply reporting those that were causes celebres.

Therefore accepting the stereotype of Jack Tar, as with all stereotypes, is fraught with danger. Whilst some sailors evidently caused trouble ashore others did not and it would be grossly unfair to suggest the stereotype is accurate. Although this article has not had the time to consider the topic in-depth it can nevertheless be argued that these were men who lived a disciplined life afloat and needed time to experience some freedom. The war heightened this as opportunities for leave decreased and the stress of war took hold. It was crucial that sailors had some time to themselves to relax and have some fun; this was an important part of coping with life in the war-time navy.[14] Living with the constant fear of death undoubtedly had an effect upon sailors. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that given the opportunity they enjoyed themselves as much as possible.

References

[1] For example See Mary A. Conley, *From Jack Tar to Union Jack: Representing Naval Manhood in the British Empire, 1870-1918*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009); Christopher McKee, *Sober Men and True: Sailor Lives in the Royal Navy, 1900-1945*, (London: Harvard University Press, 2002).

[2] For more on this line of thought please see other contributions to the Port Towns and Urban Cultures project, in particular the work by Louise Moon.

[3] Henry Baynham, *Men from the Dreadnoughts*, (London: Hutchinson, 1976), 190.

[4] See for example, "Diary of Walter Dennis, 3 December 1914 and 28 February 1915." Diary digitalized by *McMaster University*, Ontario Canada and available at http://pw20c.mcmaster.ca

[5] "Diary of Walter Dennis," 8 September 1914.

[6] See for example RNM 1980/115: "Diary of Edwin Fletcher", 9 January 1918; "Diary of Walter Dennis", 8 September 1914.

[7] McKee, *Sober Men and True*; Baynham, *Men*, 191. One sailor who did discuss activities ashore is Stoker Robert Percival; Percival goes into detail about prostitution in Malta in 1912. See RNM 1988/294: "Memoirs of Robert Percival."

[8] 2Diary of Walter Dennis," 19 November 1914. RNM 1976/65: "Diary of William Williams," 26 June 1902.

[9] Baynham, *Men*, 192.

[10] "Diary of Walter Dennis," 19 November 1914.

[11] "Diary of Walter Dennis," 3 December 1914.

[12] “Diary of Walter Dennis,” 29 January 1915.

[13] RNM 1980/115: “Diary of Edwin Fletcher.”

[14] For further information on the effect of war on sailors please see Simon Smith, ‘An intimate history of… sailors, killing and death in the First World’, (April 2014).

It's only fair to share...

3 Responses to *Sailors on Shore Leave During the First World War: reinforcing stereotypes of Jack Tar?*

1. Laika Nevalainen May 27, 2015 at 12:02 pm #

Hi, I totally agree with you that we need to be cautious with such stereotypes. It was interesting to find similarities and links between your research and what I have found when I have been reading memory writings from former Finnish sailors, who worked on merchant ships at the end of the 19th c. and beginning of the 20th (the memory writings were collected in the 1960s).

I found that there was a shared understanding about how sailors, who, like you said, on board lead a disciplined, simple and even dangerous life, deserved and understandably wanted to relax and enjoy themselves once they were in a harbour. Drinking and other stereotypical sailor behaviour were considered to be some of the attributes of a “real” sailor’s life as well as being part of the initiation rites that beginners and young sailors had to go trough.

However, I also found that there were many respondents who wanted to distance themselves from this stereotypical image. This was done by explicitly underlining their own sobriety or presenting trying alcohol as something that happened at the beginning of their careers, or, when they talked about drinking etc., it was always done by other people. Some respondent also saw excessive use of alcohol as a sign of weakness.

But the problem I face in interpreting these responses is the nature of the sources as memory writings written, usually, several decades later. One of the big questions I have been dealing with is how did the sailors’ attitudes and perspectives change 1) as they got older, educated themselves and became officers as well as got married, and 2) by the time they were writing their memories down.

- Simon Smith May 28, 2015 at 4:13 pm #

Hello Laika, can I just say I really enjoyed your contribution to the website. Your work sounds very interesting.

I think you are quite right in saying that many sailors also wanted to distance themselves from the stereotypical image (although others noticeably played up to it too). I mentioned in the article a disturbance caused by one particular ship whilst ashore – in fact it was blamed on a party of stokers from that ship and stokers were regularly viewed as the more “wild” element of the crew and different to sailors. I also agree that often sailors discuss others being drunk rather than talking about their own exploits ashore and this is a good point to make.

Have you any thoughts on the impact of religion on this? I have noticed that some of the Methodist sailors were less likely to discuss drink etc. in their diaries (obviously temperance was a big part of their religious doctrine).

Your two questions are obviously very challenging. One of the nice things about the diaries I have looked at is that they are written up either the same day or within the next few days after the event – although their perspective may change over a day or so if they have time to reflect on events. However I have looked at several diaries over a long career in the navy and it is interesting to see whether their opinions change over the course of their service. I haven't followed that many through so can't really comment on this but certainly with the wartime diaries I have looked at you sense them growing older and their attitude changing.

- Laika Nevalainen June 2, 2015 at 8:06 am #

  Thank you, that's nice to hear, and, likewise, your research also sounds very interesting and I think it can be very fruitful to compare the experiences of sailors from different countries.

  I think you are right in bringing up religion, in my sources I do not have many men who explicitly write about their relationship to religion or state being very religious but at least generally it seems that sailors who were religious were considered to be a bit different in their attitudes and that this was respected. I have one respondent who describes his stay in a sailor's home in Norway and praise, among other things, the religious practices of the home. He states that after this experience he never wanted go and live in a bar again. I feel that it is quite hard to try and estimate how religious, for example, an average working-class person was at that time and I definitely need to read more previous research about that. One point which I have been pondering is how much sailors in a way internalised the messages that the Mission, the media or the sailor's homes represented especially as they got older and how much they then reproduced (or thought they had to reproduce) in their own writings.

  The diaries you are using must be a wonderful source! This summer I am going to explore if some sailor diaries have also survived here in Finland. Do you know whether your sailors were just writing the diaries for themselves or did they have other aims or purposes for them? I have some respondents who continued working on merchant ships during the war and who tell stories about the dangerous situations they encountered during the war (some even ended up in war camps) but obviously their situation was nothing compared to the men working on actual war ships as in you case. The war must have really changed the general atmosphere onboard as well as personal attitudes.

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Strange events lead Ind. family to resort to exorcism

Marisa Kwiatkowski, The Indianapolis Star

usatoday.com

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Strange events lead Ind. family to resort to exorcism

USA TODAY



Latoya Ammons and her family faced escalating experiences with demons that left evidence of their existence seen by credible witnesses outside her family. Blessings and exorcisms, more than one, finally brought peace. The Indianapolis Star

Child welfare workers, police, psychologists, Catholic priest are split on demonic claims.



INI Exorcism 27.JPG

LaToya Ammons talks about the demons that she says tormented her and her children in the rented Gary, Ind., home where they once lived.(Photo: Kelly Wilkinson, The Indianapolis Star)

Story Highlights

- The family first sought help for the strange occurrences in their rented home in 2012
- Child welfare workers determined the family members suffered from delusions and removed the children from the home
- A local priest performed a minor exorcism and several major exorcisms on the children and LaToya Ammons

Police Capt. Charles Austin said it was the strangest story he had ever heard.

Austin, a 36-year veteran of the Gary Police Department, said he initially thought Indianapolis resident Latoya Ammons and her family concocted an elaborate tale of demon possessions and supernatural occurrences as a way to make money. But after several visits to their home and interviews with witnesses, Austin said simply, "I am a believer."

Not everyone involved with the family was inclined to believe its incredible story.

But, whatever the cause of the creepy occurrences that befell the family — whether they were seized by a systematic delusion or demonic possession — it led to one of the most unusual cases ever handled by the Department of Child Services. Many of the events are detailed in nearly 800 pages of official records obtained by *The Indianapolis Star* and recounted in more than a dozen interviews with police, DCS personnel, psychologists, family members and a Catholic priest.

Furthermore, the family's story is made only more bizarre because it involves a DCS intervention, a string of psychological evaluations, a police investigation and, ultimately, a series of exorcisms.

It started with flies

In November 2011, Ammons' family moved into a rental house on Carolina Street in Gary, a quiet lane lined with small one-story homes. Big black flies suddenly swarmed their screened-in porch in December, despite the winter chill.

"This is not normal," Ammons' mother, Rosa Campbell, remembers thinking. "We killed them and killed them and killed them, but they kept coming back."

There were other strange happenings, too.

After midnight, Campbell and Ammons both said, they occasionally heard the steady clump of footsteps climbing the basement stairs and the creak of the door opening between the basement and kitchen. No one was there.

Campbell said she awoke one night and saw a shadowy figure of a man pacing her living room. She leaped out of bed to investigate, and found large, wet bootprints.

On March 10, 2012, Campbell said, the family's unease turned to fear.

It was about 2 a.m. Normally, Campbell, Ammons and her children would have been asleep, but they were mourning the death of a loved one with a group of friends.

Ammons, who was in Campbell's bedroom, startled everyone by screaming, "Mama! Mama!"



(Photo: Kelly Wilkinson, The Indianapolis Star)

The Carolina Street house in Gary, Ind., where Latoya Ammons lived with her family is photographed Friday, Sept. 13, 2013.

Campbell said she ran into her bedroom, where her then-12-year-old granddaughter and a friend were staying.

Ammons and Campbell said the 12-year-old was levitating above the bed, unconscious.

According to their account of events, Ammons and several others surrounded the girl, praying. Eventually, Campbell said, her granddaughter descended onto the bed. The girl woke up with no memory of what happened, Campbell said.

Family sought help

Campbell and Ammons called local churches looking for help with what they believed was something supernatural, but most refused to listen.

Eventually, after listening to Campbell and Ammons talk about the house and visiting it, officials at one church told them the Carolina Street house had spirits in it. They recommended the family clean the home with bleach and ammonia, then use oil to draw crosses on every door and window.

Campbell and Ammons also told The Star they reached out to two clairvoyants, who said the family's home was besieged by more than 200 demons. Their explanation made sense to Campbell and Ammons, they say, because it meshed with their Christian faith.

The best thing you can do is move, Ammons remembers the clairvoyants telling her. But moving wasn't an option for the cash-strapped family.

Instead, Ammons said she took a clairvoyant's advice and made an altar in the basement.

Also on a clairvoyant's advice, they burned sage and sulfur throughout the house, and a person she was with read Psalm 91 aloud.

Ammons said nothing odd happened for three days. Then, things got worse.

The family said demons possessed Ammons and her children, then ages 7, 9 and 12. The kids' eyes bulged, evil smiles crossed their faces, and their voices deepened every time it happened, Campbell and Ammons said.

Campbell said the demons didn't affect her because she was born with protection from evil. She said she, and others like her, have a guardian who protects them.

Ammons said she felt weak, lightheaded and warm when she was possessed. Her body shook, and she said she felt out-of-control.

"You can tell it's different, something supernatural."

Finally, in desperation, they went to their family physician, Dr. Geoffrey Onyeukwu, on April 19, 2012. Ammons said she told him what they were going through, hoping he might understand.

Onyeukwu told The Star it was "bizarre."

"Twenty years, and I've never heard anything like that in my life," he said. "I was scared myself when I walked into the room."

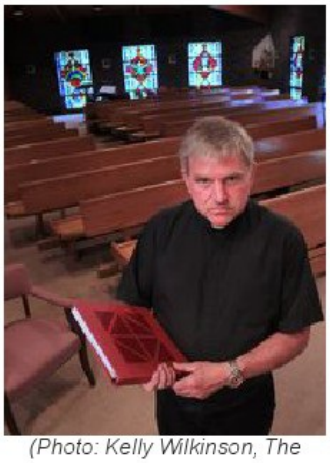
In his medical notes about the visit, Onyeukwu wrote "delusions of ghost in home" and "hallucinations."

What Ammons and Campbell say happened next also was detailed in a DCS report of a family case manager's interviews with medical staff.

Chaos erupts

Campbell said Ammons' sons cursed Onyeukwu in demonic voices, raging at him. Medical staff said the youngest boy was "lifted and thrown into the wall with nobody touching him," according to a DCS report.

The boys abruptly passed out and wouldn't come to, Campbell added. She cradled one boy in her arms; Ammons held the other.



(Photo: Kelly Wilkinson, The Indianapolis Star)

Father Mike Maginot performed an exorcism on LaToya Ammons in St Steven Martyr Church in Merrillville, Ind.

Someone from the doctor's office called 911. Onyeukwu said seven or eight police officers and multiple ambulances showed up.

"Everybody was ... they couldn't figure out exactly what was happening," he recalled.

Meanwhile, someone called DCS and asked the agency to investigate Ammons for possible child abuse or neglect. The caller, who is not named in the DCS report, believed the children were performing for Ammons, and she was encouraging their behavior.

DCS family case manager Valerie Washington was asked to handle the initial investigation. She interviewed the family in the hospital.

While she spoke with Ammons, the 7-year-old boy started growling with his teeth showing. His eyes rolled back in his head.

The boy locked his hands around his older brother's throat and refused to let go until adults pried his hands open.

Later that evening, Washington and registered nurse Willie Lee Walker brought the two boys into a small exam room for an interview. Campbell joined them.

The 7-year-old stared into his brother's eyes and began to growl again.

"It's time to die," the boy said in a deep, unnatural voice. "I will kill you."

While the youngest boy spoke, the older brother started head-butting Campbell in the stomach.

Campbell grabbed her grandson's hands and started praying.



(Photo: Kelly Wilkinson, The Indianapolis Star)

Rosa Campbell looks out from her Indianapolis home, Friday, Aug. 23, 2013.

What happened next would rattle the witnesses, and to some it would offer not only evidence but proof of paranormal activity.

According to Washington's original DCS report— an account corroborated by Walker, the nurse — the 9-year-old had a "weird grin" and walked backward up a wall to the ceiling. He then flipped over Campbell, landing on his feet. He never let go of his grandmother's hand.

"He walked up the wall, flipped over her and stood there," Walker told The Star. "There's no way he could've done that."

Walker, who said he previously believed in demons and spirits, thought

the boy's behavior had "some demonic spirit to it" but also was the result of a mental illness.

The next day, DCS took the emergency step of taking custody of the children without a court order.

Ammons told The Star she and her children cried because they didn't want to be separated.

"We'd already been through so much and fought so hard for our lives," she recalled. "It was obvious we were a team, and we were beating it — whatever we were fighting. We made it through together as a team, and they separated us."

Request for an exorcism

The Rev. Michael Maginot was leading Bible study in his living room the morning of April 20, 2012, when he received a call from a hospital chaplain.

Maginot had been the priest at St. Stephen, Martyr Parish, in Merrillville, Ind., for more than 10 years but had never received a request like this one — the chaplain asked him to perform an exorcism on Ammons' 9-year-old son.

Maginot agreed to interview the family after Sunday Mass a few days later.

The first step, Maginot said, was ruling out natural causes for what Ammons and her family said they were experiencing.

He visited Ammons and Campbell in the Carolina Street home April 22, 2012. For two hours, Ammons and Campbell detailed the phenomena for him. Then, Campbell interrupted the interview to point out a flickering bathroom light.

The flickering stopped each time Maginot walked over to investigate — which he attributed to a demonic presence.

"It must be scared of me," he later told *The Star* he had thought.

“You can tell it's different, something supernatural.”

Latoya Ammons, describing how it felt when she was possessed

After a four-hour interview, Maginot said he was convinced the family was being tormented by demons. He said he also believed there were ghosts in the house.

Less than a week later, Washington, the DCS family case manager, arrived to check the condition of the home. Washington asked a Lake County police officer to come with her.

Two other officers, one each from Gary and Hammond police departments, asked to join them out of "professional curiosity."

Austin, the Gary police captain, later told The Star he believed in ghosts and the supernatural but said he didn't believe in demons.

Austin said he changed his mind after visiting the Carolina Street house.

Austin said photos he snapped with his iPhone also seemed to have strange silhouettes in them.

The radio in his police-issued Ford malfunctioned on the way home.

Later, Austin said the garage at his Gary home refused to open, even though the power was on everywhere else.

Austin said the driver's seat in his personal 2005 Infiniti also started moving backward and forward on its own.

Austin said he found himself starting to believe Ammons' claims of paranormal activity. But the mental health professionals evaluating Ammons and her children remained skeptical.

Mom, kids deemed delusional

In April 2012, DCS successfully petitioned Lake Juvenile Court for temporary wardship of the three children.

DCS temporarily housed the two older children at St. Joseph's Carmelite Home in East Chicago. Ammons' youngest son was sent to Christian Haven in Wheatfield for a psychiatric evaluation.

Clinical psychologist Stacy Wright said the boy tended to act possessed when he was challenged, redirected or asked questions he didn't want to answer. In her evaluation, Wright wrote that he seemed coherent and logical except when he talked about demons.

Wright believed the 8-year-old did not suffer from a true psychotic disorder.

"This appears to be an unfortunate and sad case of a child who has been induced into a delusional system perpetuated by his mother and potentially reinforced" by other relatives, she wrote in her psychological evaluation.

Clinical psychologist Joel Schwartz, who evaluated Ammons' daughter and older son, came to a similar conclusion.

Police and DCS officials continued to investigate strange happenings in the house.

Campbell, Ammons, Austin and the two other police officers from the initial visit went back to the home after work hours on May 10, 2012. They were joined by Maginot, two Lake County officers with a police dog and DCS family case manager Samantha Ilic.

A county officer took his police dog around the home, but the dog didn't show interest in any particular area, according to Lake County police records. Everyone else headed into the basement.

Ilic touched some strange liquid she saw dripping in the basement, and said it felt slippery yet sticky between her fingers.

Maginot blessed some salt, which he said is a barrier to evil, and spread it under the stairs and throughout the basement.

On the main floor, officers noticed an oil-like substance dripping from venetian blinds in a bedroom but couldn't figure out where it was coming from, police records state.

To make sure Campbell or Ammons hadn't poured oil on the blinds, two of the officers used paper towels to clean it off. The officers sealed the room for 25 minutes and stood nearby so no one could

walk in.

When they went back in, the oil had reappeared, according to police records.

Maginot wrote a report detailing his findings and asked Bishop Dale Melczek's permission to perform an exorcism on Ammons.

A series of exorcisms

Maginot said Melczek had never authorized an exorcism in 21 years as bishop of the Diocese of Gary.

Melczek initially denied Maginot's request to do a church-sanctioned exorcism, Maginot said. The bishop told Maginot to contact other priests who have performed exorcisms.



(Photo: Kelly Wilkinson, The Indianapolis Star)

The Rev. Mike Maginot used this crucifix to see if demons were present in Latoya Ammons. When he placed the crucifix on her, she convulsed, showing their presence.

Maginot said he needed other priests to give him the ritual for a minor exorcism, which does not require church approval. The priests he consulted told him to look it up on the Internet.

He said he did an "intense blessing" on the Carolina Street home to expel bad spirits.

That same day, Maginot performed a minor exorcism on Ammons. The ritual consisted of prayers, statements and appeals to cast out demons.

Two police officers and Ilic, the DCS family case manager, attended the ritual.

Ilic said she left believing that something was going on, although she wouldn't go as far as saying it was demonic. She said she got chills during the nearly two-hour rite.

"We felt like someone was in the room with you, someone breathing down your neck."

After the minor rite, Maginot said Bishop Melczek gave him permission to exorcise Ammons. The ritual is the same as the minor exorcism but more powerful because it has the backing of the Catholic Church, Maginot said.

Maginot ultimately performed three major exorcisms on Ammons – two in English, and the last one in Latin – in June 2012 at his Merrillville church.

In the final exorcism at the end of June 2012, Maginot said he prayed and berated the demons in Latin, rather than English.

It would be the last time Ammons saw Maginot. She and her mother drove back to Indianapolis, where they say they now live without fear.

Ammons' old home on Carolina Street became an object of local curiosity — so much so that the

owner and landlord, Charles Reed, called the Gary Police Department to ask officers to stop driving by the house because it was scaring his new tenant.

He said there were no problems in the home before or after Ammons and her family lived there.

"I thought I heard it all," said Reed, who's been a landlord for 33 years. "This was a new one to me. My belief system has a hard time jumping over that bridge."

Ammons regained custody of her three children in November 2012 and the DCS closed the case last February.

The children said they felt safe after they left the house on Carolina Street, the family said. The three left their demonic voices and complaints behind them.

"The family is no longer fixated solely on religion to explain or cope with the children's behavior issues," Olejnik and her supervisor wrote in a request for dismissal of wardship dated Jan. 24, 2013.

For her part, Ammons said it was not the psychologists who resolved her problems but God.

"When you hear something like this," she said, "don't assume it's not real because I've lived it. I know it's real."

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What is that? Strange light spotted above Gateway Arch in St. Louis

fox59.com

Posted 10:59 AM, August 4, 2016, by FOX59 Web, Updated at 11:00am, August 4, 2016

ST. LOUIS, Mo. – No one can seem to explain exactly what they saw above St. Louis' Gateway Arch earlier this week.

The flashing light above the arch has everyone baffled, including Chase Rhoads, who shot video of the flashing light early Tuesday morning and shared it with KTVI.

Rhoads was leaving Casino Queen around 2:30 a.m. when he noticed the light and shot the video. He has no idea what it was. Making things even more mysterious, the National Park Service said it didn't have any reports of strange flights and no one reported anything out of the ordinary.

KTVI put in a call to Scott Air Force Base, where officials said there was nothing to report and they hadn't received any phone calls.

Rhoads said the light has him perplexed.

A surveillance camera from Malcolm W. Martin Memorial park recorded a second video of the light.

"We guarantee you will be perplexed if you watch all 5 minutes of this surveillance footage!" reads the post on the park's Facebook page.

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TV News Anchor, 24, Dies In Accidental Plunge Off 185-Foot Waterfall

insideedition.com



Inside Edition

by Inside Edition10:14 AM EDT, July 24, 2016

A Georgia local TV news anchor died last week after a fatal plunge from a waterfall in North Carolina.

Taylor Terrell, an anchor at a Macon, Georgia TV station WMGT, was swimming with a friend in the water at the top of Rainbow Falls in Transylvania County, North Carolina on Thursday.

Terrell somehow lost her footing and was swept away by the Horsepasture River current before plummeting 185 feet off Rainbow Falls, authorities say.

In a 911 call obtained by WLOS, Terrell's panicked friend tells authorities that Terrell seemed to just vanish.

"Hi, I'm at Rainbow Falls. My friend got caught by the current, and I don't know where she is, and I can't find her," the friend said.

Emergency responders were only able to reach the scene on foot and Terrell's body was not discovered for four hours.

The Georgia Southern University grad was set to celebrate her 25th birthday on Friday.

"To say that this loss is devastating for us here at 41NBC and to her family is an understatement. Taylor was scheduled to be off today to celebrate her 25th birthday. Instead, we're remembering her spirit, her optimism, and her work," WMGT wrote in a report on the tragedy.

Terrell's was the third death at a waterfall in Transylvania County just since May, Lake Toxaway Deputy Chief Bobby Cooper told reporters.

Rainbow Falls is located in the Pisgah National Forest in North Carolina's Blue Ridge Mountains.

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Summer is a-comin - The Traditions and Superstitions of the Summer Soltice

blogspot.co.uk

http://darkdorset.blogspot.co.uk/2016/06/summer-is-comin-traditions-and.html



Dark Dorset Online Scrapbook is an archive of current and past events relating to local history, folklore and mysteries that can be discovered in the English county of Dorset.

Monday, 20 June 2016



It was once customary to turn around three times sun-wise (clockwise) for luck as soon as one got out of bed on the morning of the 'Summer Solstice'.

The Summer Solstice or 'Litha'

, as it was once called, occurs on either the 20th, 21st or 22nd June and it is the day when the sun is at its highest point in the sky and daylight lasts longest. The word 'solstice' has its origins in the Latin word 'solstitium' meaning the 'sun stands still'. This day was important for pagan people who would celebrate this fire festival by lighting ritual bonfires in honour of the sun. They would dance sun-wise around the fire before joining hands and leaping through it and when the fire had burnt out, its ashes were used to foretell the future

The sun has been worshiped since the dawn of man and has long been seen as a power for good, driving away darkness and likewise dark forces. Even today it is seen as a symbol of good fortune, health, wealth and happiness, leading to such sayings as: 'Happy is the bride the sun shines on', and 'The sun shines on the righteous'. However, because the sun is divine since ancient times, it is still commonly believed unlucky to make any insulting gestures towards it, such as pointing at it. According to folklore anyone born at sunrise will be intelligent and quick witted, while those born at sunset will be slow and idle.

The Midsummer moon is often called the "Honey Moon" for the mead made from fermented honey that was part of pagan wedding ceremonies performed at the Summer Solstice.

Below: Extract taken from the *Chambers Book of Days* June 21st 1864, details the traditions of the Summer Soltice.

Characteristics of June

Though the summer solstice takes place on the 21st day, June is only the third month of the year in respect of temperature, being preceded in this respect by July and August. The mornings, in the early part of the month especially, are liable to be even frosty, to the extensive damage of the buds of the fruit-trees. Nevertheless, June is the mouth of greatest summer beauty—the month during which the trees are in their best and freshest garniture. 'The leafy month of June,' Coleridge well calls it, the month when the flowers are at the richest in hue and profusion. In English landscape, the conical clusters of the chestnut buds, and the tassels of the laburnum and lilac, vie above with the variegated show of wild flowers below. Nature is now a pretty maiden of seventeen; she may show maturer charms afterwards, but she can never be again so gaily, so freshly beautiful. Dr Aiken says justly that June is in reality, in this climate, what the poets only dream May to be. The mean temperature of the air was given by an observer in Scotland as 59° Fahrenheit, against 60° for August and 61° for July.

The sun, formally speaking, reaches the most northerly point in the zodiac, and enters the constellation of Cancer, on the 21st of June; but for several days about that time there is no observable difference in his position, or his hours of rising and setting. At Greenwich he is above the horizon from 3:43 morning, to 8:17 evening, thus making a day of 16h. 26m. At Edinburgh, the longest day is about 17½ hours. At that season, in Scotland, there is a glow equal to dawn, in the north, through the whole of the brief night. The present writer was able at Edinburgh to read the title-page of a book, by the light of the northern sky, at midnight of the 14th of Juno 1849. In Shetland, the light at mid-night is like a good twilight, and the text of any ordinary book may then be easily read. It is even alleged that, by the aid of refraction, and in favourable circumstances, the body of the sun has been seen at that season, from the top of a hill in Orkney, though the fact cannot be said to be authenticated.

Marrige Superstitions and Customs

was the month which the Romans considered the most propitious season of the year for contracting matrimonial engagements, chosen were I that of the full moon or the conjunction of the sun and moon; the month of May was especially to be avoided, as under the influence of spirits adverse to happy households.

All these pagan superstitions were retained in the Middle Ages, with many others which belonged more particularly to the spirit of Christianity: people then had recourse to all kinds of divination, love philters, magical invocations, prayers, fastings, and other follies, which were modified according to the country and the individual. A girl had only to agitate the water in a bucket of spring-water with her hand, or to throw broken eggs over another person's head, if she wished to see the image of the man she should marry. A union could never be happy if the bridal party, in going to church, met a monk, a priest, a hare, a dog, cat, lizard, or serpent; while all would go well if it were a wolf, a spider, or a toad. Nor was it an unimportant matter to choose the wedding day carefully; the feast of Saint Joseph was especially to be avoided, and it is supposed, that as this day fell in mid-Lent, it was the reason why all the councils and synods of the church forbade marriage during that season of fasting; indeed, all penitential days and vigils throughout the year were considered unsuitable for these joyous ceremonies.

The church blamed those husbands who married early in the morning, in dirty or negligent attire, reserving their better dresses for balls and feasts; and the clergy were forbidden to celebrate the rites after sunset, because the crowd often carried the party by main force to the ale-house, or beat them and hindered their departure from the church until they had paid a ransom. The people always manifested a strong aversion for badly assorted marriages. In such cases, the procession would be accompanied to the altar in the midst of a frightful concert of bells, sauce-pans, and frying-pans, or this tumult was reserved for the night, when the happy couple were settled in their own house. The church tried in vain to defend widowers and widows who chose to enter the nuptial bonds a second time; a synodal order of the Archbishop of Lyons, in 1577, thus describes the conduct it excommunicated: ' Marching in masks, throwing poisons, horrible and dangerous liquids before the door, sounding tambourines, doing all kinds of dirty things they can think of, until they have drawn from the husband large sums of' money by force.'

A considerable sum of money was anciently put into a purse or plate, and presented by the bridegroom to the bride on the wedding-night, as a sort of purchase of her person; a custom common to the Greeks as well as the Ro-mans, and which seems to have prevailed among the Jews and many Eastern nations. It was changed in the Middle Ages, and in the north of Europe, for the morgengabe, or morning present; the bride having the privilege, the morning after the wedding-day, of asking for any sum of money or any estate that she pleased, and which could not in honour be refused by her husband. The demand at times became really serious, if the wife were of an avaricious temper. Something of the same kind prevailed in England under the name of the Dow Purse. A trace of this is still kept up in Cumberland where the bridegroom provides himself with gold and crown pieces, and, when the service reaches the point, ' With all my worldly goods I thee endow,' he takes up the money, hands the clergyman his fee, and pours the rest into a handkerchief which is held by the bridesmaid for the bride. When Clovis was married to the Princess Clotilde, he offered, by his proxy, a sou and a denier, which became the marriage offering by law in France; and to this day pieces of money are given to the bride, varying only in value according to the rank of the parties.

How the ring came to be used is not well ascertained, as in former days it did not occupy its present prominent position, but was given with other presents to mark the completion of a contract. Its form is intended as a symbol of eternity, and of the intention of both parties to keep for ever the solemn covenant into which they have entered before God, and of which it is a pledge. When the persons were betrothed as children, among the Anglo-Saxons, the bride-groom gave a pledge, or 'wed' (a term from which we derive the word wedding); part of this wed consisted of a ring, which was placed on the maiden's right hand, and there religiously kept until transferred to the other hand at the second ceremony. Our marriage service is very nearly the same as that used by our forefathers, a few obsolete words only being changed.

The bride was taken 'for fairer, for fouler, for better, for worse;' and promised 'to be buxom and bonny' to her future husband. The bridegroom put the ring on each of the bride's left-hand fingers in turn, saying at the first, 'in the name of the Father;' at the second, 'in the name of the Son,' at the third, ' in the name of the Holy Ghost;' and at the fourth, 'Amen.' The father presented his son-in-law with one of his daughter's shoes as a

token of the transfer of authority, and the bride was made to feel the change by a blow on her head given with the shoe. The husband was bound by oath to use his wife well, in failure of which she might leave him; yet as a point of honour he was allowed 'to bestow on his wife and apprentices moderate castigation.' An old Welsh law tells us that three blows with a broomstick, on any 'part of the person except the head, is a fair allowance;' and another provides that the stick be not longer than the husband's arm, nor thicker than his middle finger.

An English wedding, in the time of good Queen Bess, was a joyous public festival; among the higher ranks, the bridegroom presented the company with scarves, gloves, and garters of the favourite colours of the wedding pair; and the ceremony wound up with. banquetings, masques, pageants, and epithalamiums. A gay procession formed a part of the humbler marriages; the bride was led to church between two boys wearing bride-laces and rosemary tied about their silken sleeves, and before her was carried a silver cup filled with wine, in which was a large branch of gilded rosemary, hung about with silk ribbons of all colours. Next came the musicians, and then the bridesmaids, some bearing great bridecakes, others garlands of gilded wheat; thus they marched to church amidst the shouts and benedictions of the spectators.

The penny weddings, at which each of the guests gave a contribution for the feast, were reprobated by the straiter-laced sort as leading to disorders and licentiousness; but it was found impossible to suppress them. All that could be done was to place restrictions upon the amount allowed to be given; in Scotland five shillings was the limit.

The customs of marrying and giving in marriage in Sweden, in former years, were of a somewhat barbarous character; it was beneath the dignity of a Scandinavian warrior to court a lady's favour by gallantry and submission—he waited until she had bestowed her affections on another, and was on her way to the marriage ceremony, when, collecting his faithful followers, who were always ready for the fight, they fell upon the wedding cortege, and the stronger carried away the bride. It was much in favour of this practice that marriages were always celebrated at night. A pile of lances is still preserved behind the altar of the ancient church of Husaby, in Gothland, into which were fitted torches, and which were borne before the bridegroom for the double purpose of giving light and protection. It was the province of the groomsmen, or, as they were named, 'best men,' to carry these; and the strongest and stoutest of the bridegroom's friends were chosen for this duty. Three or four days before the marriage, the ceremony of the bride's bath took place, when the lady went in great state to the bath, accompanied by all her friends, married and single; the day closing with a banquet and ball.

On the marriage-day the young couple sat on a raised platform, under a canopy of silk; all the wedding presents being arranged on a bench covered with silk, and consisting of plate, jewels, and money. To this day the bridegroom has a great fear of the trolls and sprites which still inhabit Sweden; and, as an antidote against their power, he sews into his clothes various strong smelling herbs, such. as garlick, chives, and rosemary. The young women always carry bouquets of these in their hands to the feast, whilst they deck themselves out with loads of jewellery, gold bells, and grelots as large as small apples, with chains, belts, and stomachers. No bridegroom could be induced on that day to stand near a closed gate, or where cross roads meet; he says he takes these

precautions ' against envy and malice.' On the other hand, if the bride be prudent, she will take care when at the altar to put her right foot before that of the bridegroom, for then she will get the better of her husband during her married life; she will also be studious to get the first sight of him before he can see her, because that will pre-serve her influence over him. It is customary to fill the bride's pocket with bread, which she gives to the poor she meets on her road to church, a misfortune being averted with every alms bestowed; but the beggar will not eat it, as he thereby brings wretchedness on himself. On their return from church, the bride and bridegroom must visit their cowhouses and stables, that the cattle may thrive and multiply.

In Norway, the marriages of the bonder or peasantry are conducted with very gay ceremonies, and in each parish there is a set of ornaments for the temporary use of the bride, including a showy coronal and girdle; so that the poorest woman in the land has the gratification of appearing for one day in her life in a guise which she probably thinks equal to that of a queen. The museum of national antiquities at Copenhagen contains a number of such sets of bridal decorations which were formerly used in Denmark. In the International Exhibition at London, in 1862, the Norwegian court showed the model of a peasant couple, as dressed and decorated for their wedding; and every beholder must have been arrested by its homely splendours. Annexed is a cut representing the bride.

In pagan days, when Rolf married King Erik's daughter, the king and queen sat throned in state, whilst courtiers passed in front, offering gifts of oxen, cows, swine, sheep, sucking-pigs, geese, and even cats. A shield, sword, and axe were among the bride's wedding outfit, that she might, if necessary, defend herself from her husband's blows.

In the vast steppes of south-eastern Russia, on the shores of the Caspian and Black Sea, marriage ceremonies recall the patriarchal customs of the earliest stages of society. The evening before the day when the affianced bride is given to her husband, she pays visits to her master and the inhabitants of the village, in the simple dress of a peasant, consisting of a red cloth jacket, descending as low as the knees, a very short white petticoat, fastened at the waist with a red woollen scarf, above which is an embroidered chemise. The legs, which are always bare above the ankle, are sometimes protected by red or yellow morocco boots. The girls of the village who accompany her are, on the contrary, attired in their best, recalling the old paintings of Byzantine art, where the Virgin is adorned with a coronal. They know how to arrange with great art the leaves and scarlet berries of various kinds of trees in their hair, the tresses of which are plaited as a crown, or hang down on the shoulders. A necklace of pearls or coral is wound at least a dozen times round the neck, on which they hang religious medals, with. enamel paintings imitating mosaic.

At each house the betrothed throws herself on her knees before the head of it, and kisses his feet as she begs his pardon; the fair penitent is immediately raised and kissed, receiving some small present, whilst she in return gives a small roll of bread, of a symbolic form. On her return home all her beautiful hair is cut off, as henceforth she must wear the platoke, or turban, a woollen or linen shawl which is rolled round the head, and is the only distinction between the married and unmarried. It is invariably presented by the husband, as the Indian shawl among ourselves; which, however, we have withdrawn from its original destination, which ought only to be a head-dress. The

despoiled bride expresses her regrets with touching grace, in one of their simple songs: 'Oh, my curls, my fair golden hair! Not for one only, not for two years only, have I arranged you—every Saturday you were bathed, every Sunday you were ornamented, and to-day, in a single hour, I must lose you!' The old woman whose duty it is to roll the turban round the brow, wishing her happiness, says, ' I cover your head with the platoke:, my sister, and I wish you health and happiness. Be pure as water, and fruitful as the earth.' When the marriage is over, the husband takes his wife to the inhabitants of the village, and shows them the change of dress effected the night before.

Among the various tribes of Asia none are so rich or well-dressed as the Armenians; to them belongs chiefly the merchandise of precious stones, which they export to Constantinople. The Armenian girl whose marriage is to be described had delicate flowers of celestial blue painted all over her breast and neck, her eye-brows were dyed black, and the tips of her fingers and nails of a bright orange. She wore on each hand valuable rings set with precious stones, and round her neck a string of very fine turquoises; her shirt was of the finest spun silk, her jacket and trousers of cashmere of a bright colour. The priest and his deacon arrived; the latter bringing a bag containing the sacerdotal garments, in which the priest arrayed himself, placing a mitre ornamented with precious stones on his head, and a collar of metal,—on which the twelve apostles were represented in bas-relief, —round his neck. He began by blessing a sort of temporary altar in the middle of the room; the mother of the bride took her by the hand, and leading her forward, she bowed at the feet of her future husband, to show that she acknowledged him as lord and master. The priest, placing their hands in each other, pronounced a prayer, and then drew their heads together until they touched three times, while with his right hand he made a motion as if blessing them; a second time their hands were joined, and the bridegroom was asked, 'Will you be her husband?' will,' he answered, raising at the same time the veil of the bride, in token that she was now his, and letting it fall again. The priest then took two wreaths of flowers, ornamented with a quantity of hanging gold threads, from the hands of the deacon, put them on the heads of the married couple, changed them three times from one head to the other, repeating each time, 'I unite you, and bind you one to another —live in peace.' Such are the customs in the very land where man was first created; and, among nations who change so little as those in the East, we may fairly believe them to be among the most ancient.

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This Sunscreen-Pooping Seagull Is Getting Slammed As Stupidest Ad Ever

huffingtonpost.com

These kids are unbelievably happy about a seagull dropping its "load" on them.

07/07/2016 02:08 pm ET

- Hilary Hanson Viral News Editor, The Huffington Post

If you can't gain fame and glory by being the best, you might as well do it by being the worst — or at least, the "stupidest."

This Nivea ad, which features a seagull-shaped drone that defecates blobs of sunscreen onto children at the beach, is the work of German agency Jung von Matt/Elbe and was submitted to this year's Cannes Lions advertising festival, Adweek reports.

And it was the first ad that Cannes jury president John Hegarty mentioned in his comments announcing the festival winners. But not because he thought it was good.

"It's the most stupid thing I think I've seen in my whole life," Hegarty, who co-founded the Bartle Bogle Hegarty agency, said at a press conference. "I actually thought the Monty Python team had gotten together and entered it into [Cannes], to see if we would vote for it."

We have to assume these kids are actors, and not actually unsuspecting random children, since they seem to react to the sunblock-poop with delight and laughter, rather than horror and tears.

Neither Nivea nor Jung von Matt/Elbe responded to a request for comment, though the ad agency told Adweek. that they weren't doing any PR around the commercial.

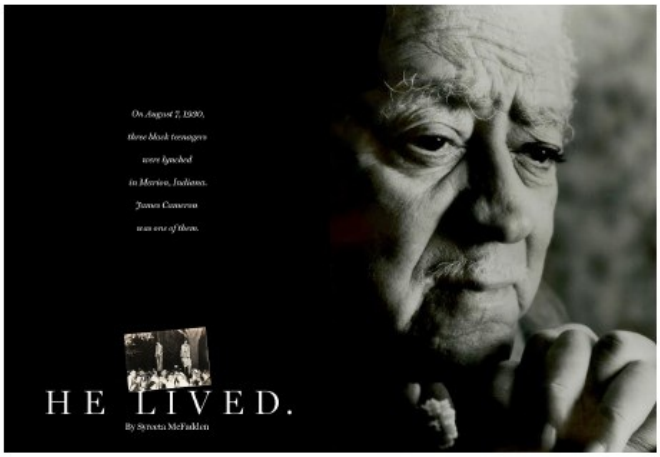
Media outlets are jumping on the bandwagon to slam this ad, but we think the criticism is a little harsh. Maybe it's not the best commercial in the world, but we've seen worse. Much, much worse.

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What Do You Do After Surviving Your Own Lynching?

buzzfeed.com



Lawrence Beitler / Indiana Historical Society; Courtesy America's Black Holocaust Museum



Syreeta McFadden

Syreeta McFadden
BuzzFeed Contributor
posted on Jun. 23, 2016, at 8:00 p.m.

Lawrence Beitler was sitting on the front porch of his home in Marion, Indiana, when someone asked him to tote his 8×10 view camera to the town square. It was past midnight on August 7, 1930, and Beitler, 44, was a professional photographer who mostly shot portraits of weddings, schoolchildren, and church groups. That night, he would be photographing a lynching. He "didn't even want to do it," according to a later interview with his daughter, "but taking pictures was his business."

By the time Beitler arrived on the square, a jubilant mob of nearly 15,000 white men, women, and children had gathered. Earlier that night, a group of vigilantes had charged the county jail to seize two black teenagers — Thomas Shipp, 18, and Abram Smith, 19 — who'd allegedly raped a young white woman and murdered her boyfriend. Beitler took one photo of Shipp's and Smith's brutalized bodies hanging from a tree, the crowd of eager onlookers before them, and left.

Lynching, in the American imagination, is considered to be solely the provenance of Confederate racism, one of the most prominent examples being the 1955 murder of 14-year-old Emmett Till in Mississippi. Yet the most notorious lynching imagery prior to Till came from Union towns: Duluth, Minnesota; Cairo, Illinois; Omaha, Nebraska — and Marion, Indiana. It is Beitler's photograph, in particular, that has served as the most glaring visual reminder of the country's decades-long spectacle of racism and public murder. The photo of the lynching of two Indiana teenagers would never grace the pages of the local paper. But the image is everywhere.

It was Beitler's photograph that inspired Abel Meeropol to write his anti-lynching poem "Strange Fruit" in 1936, which Billie Holiday would later record and make famous. Just last month, a decade-old mural adaptation of the photograph in Elgin, Illinois, which features only the faces of the white participants, came under public scrutiny as people discovered the image's origin.

> The photo of the lynching of two Indiana teenagers would never grace the pages of the local paper. But the image is everywhere.

ID: 8991709

I can't say exactly when I first encountered the image. It might have been as an undergrad at Columbia, in the library of the black students' lounge as I thumbed through a copy of Ralph Ginzburg's *100 Years of Lynchings*. But my understanding of its significance came in the late summer of 1996, when a friend and I visited America's Black Holocaust Museum (ABHM) in my hometown of Milwaukee.

When we entered the main exhibition room, there was a built-to-scale rendering of Beitler's photo made out of wax, including the facsimiles of Shipp and Smith hanging from the tree. "Did you know that there was a third boy they tried to lynch that night?" our museum guide, a tall but frail older man, asked us, his voice warm and gravelly. We didn't. Our guide went on to explain that there were actually three ropes strung up on the maple tree in Marion on August 7, 1930. A third teenager had been dragged from his jail cell to the courthouse square. His name was James Cameron and he was the only known person to have ever survived a lynching in America.

We were standing in front of him.

Cameron, then 82, continued to recount to an audience of two the details of the night he nearly died. A self-



others to justice. While the House of Representatives passed several bills to address the epidemic of lynching from the 1930s and 1940s, these bills died on the Senate floor or faced filibuster from Southern Democrats. "There may be no other injustice in American history for which the Senate so uniquely bears responsibility," Landrieu said before the vote.

Cameron, then 91 and using a wheelchair, was the only living representative who could attend on behalf of the nation's 5,000 known lynching victims. When he entered the press room, he was greeted by 100 photographers and reporters, and thunderous applause. He recalled how, after he was taken back to the jail in Marion, Sheriff Campbell told him, "I'm going to get you out of here for safekeeping" — only to learn later that Campbell himself was a member of the Ku Klux Klan. "I was saved," Cameron said, "by a miracle."

"My father had that strength. That he could forgive the thing that people tried to do to him."

ID: 8991753

"It was amazing for him," Virgil said. "He thought it was the final recognition for what slavery was. It was the apology he was looking for that America should have apologized long ago." Virgil's voice broke a bit. "My father had that strength. That he could forgive the thing that people tried to do to him."

Cameron died a year later at the age of 92 after living with lymphoma for five years. The devout Catholic's funeral was held at Milwaukee's Cathedral of St. John, with hundreds in attendance, including current Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker and Rep. Gwen Moore. His wife, Virginia, died in 2010 at the age of 92; he is survived by three of his children and 18 grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

For two years following Cameron's death, America's Black Holocaust Museum remained open, with a modest staff of five and as many as ten to fifteen volunteer guides — known as "griots" — who hosted group and school visits. However, it operated on a shoestring budget and was eventually forced to close its doors in 2008, when the recession exacerbated its financial struggles.

I wonder now, with each anniversary of his near murder, how did Cameron stomach it? How, with each group of visitors, was he always willing to relive his trauma? Cameron's commitment to educate the American public, including black people and "freedom-loving whites," as he would say, of the terror of racial violence required strength and unyielding resolve that I'm not sure any one of us could ever know.



Fran Kaplan

ID: 8991379

"It's amazing that over the years that people have written plays about lynching, people have written poetry, people have done visual art … for one thing, you can't get too much more dramatic than this," Fran Kaplan told me in her home office in Milwaukee last August, as her finger landed on the folds of a book opened to a photo of a lynching from Texas in 1920. "What is the psychology of committing these kinds of murders?"

Kaplan's initial meeting with Cameron in 1999 would go on to have a profound impact on her. At 69, she is now virtual museum coordinator for ABHM, which continues to live online, receiving approximately 700,000

visitors annually from 200 countries and hosting public events like talks, screenings, and intergroup dialogues on anti-racism.

An all-volunteer operation, it centers itself around four principles: remembrance, resistance, redemption, and reconciliation.



Beitler's photo in .

ID: 8993810

In 2015, Kaplan was contacted by a white woman whose friend was lynched in her home in Mississippi during the 1960s, a killing that she felt responsible for. She had tried reaching out to the victim's family, but they wanted nothing to do with her. Kaplan encouraged the woman to look into Coming to the Table, an organization that brings together descendants of lynching perpetrators and victims to begin the work of reconciliation.

For Kaplan, the encounter only underscored the vision behind her work today: to collect and tell the stories of lynching victims. "My perspective, as a white person in this setting, is to help white people understand the tremendous jigsaw puzzle that is racism in America," Kaplan said. "So they can see the picture, so that they understand the picture, so that they can dismantle that picture."

The stories ABHM hopes to collect are not only of how lynching victims died but also of the lives they led. So often, the story of lynching is the retelling of what led to somebody's death and, for the families left behind, the shame and fear of the aftermath. "It goes to the whole sense of Black Lives Matter," said Reggie Jackson, chair of ABHM's seven-person board. "[The] lives of the people who were lynched, their lives didn't matter — so there's no reason to mention anything about them other than the act they committed that led to their lynching. The newspapers were like, 'Who really cares who they were?'"



Reggie Jackson

ID: 8991407

Jackson grew up near Money, Mississippi, the town where Emmett Till was murdered. "For years, I just wanted to go there," Jackson said. "And my family was like, 'You don't want to go asking questions about it.'" Jackson, 50, visited ABHM in the 1990s after moving back to Milwaukee from California when he completed his service in the Navy. Cameron was alone and gave Jackson a tour, and Jackson bought copies of pamphlets and his book. Before Jackson left, Cameron told Jackson his story and why he started the museum. The two men talked for over three hours. "I told myself, *I have to come back and help this man*," Jackson said. He returned to volunteer at ABHM in 2001 and eventually grew close to the Camerons, visiting the elderly couple often in their home.

In Kaplan's eyes, Jackson is the protégé of Cameron. "I wanted to follow in his footsteps," Jackson said. He currently works as a special-education teacher for a charter school, and in his free time, dedicates his energies to ABHM.

Jackson, along with Kaplan, Virgil, and core members of the board, are working with a local real estate developer to reopen ABHM at its former location on North Avenue in Bronzeville, though the neighborhood is also struggling to return to its halcyon days. Like most former urban centers that served the black community, it

experienced rapid economic decline, a victim of "urban renewal" efforts that led to the dispersal of black communities and businesses in the area. In May, Maures Development was awarded tax credits to facilitate the construction of a low-income apartment complex in Bronzeville, the ground floor of which is anticipated to provide space for the museum. "I hope it reopens," my aunt told me recently. "To see an actual piece of history … real things that were used to keep our people captive. And divided. It would be a good thing for Milwaukee to have back."

Museums educate a class of citizens in the hopes that presenting the narratives of their nation will shape identity and fidelity, pass the story forward, and, perhaps, correct past wrongs. In the act of remembering, they can serve to remind a people to do better, be better. Museums are not always mausoleums to greatness; they can be an instructional look at the fullness of humanity, so we never forget what monsters we can become and endeavor to resist it. If we forget, we repeat.

In 1998, three white men tied 49-year-old James Byrd to the back of a pickup truck and dragged him to death. In 2011, a group of Mississippi teens beat and ran over 48-year-old Craig Anderson "for fun." In 2014, the death of 17-year-old Lennon Lacy led the Justice Department to open an inquiry to determine if his death was a lynching in North Carolina. Nooses proliferate on college campuses; perpetrators feign ignorance of its meaning. Last year, a Florida graphic design company featured a noose dangling from a tree as part of an ad campaign for Photoshop tools. And just a month after that, in Marion, the boss of a firefighter tossed a noose into his black employee's hands. The employee is married to a distant relative of Abram Smith.

> If we forget, we repeat.

ID: 8991765

Yet perhaps the moment is right for Marion to again properly revisit and memorialize its lowest moment. In Glendora, Mississippi, there's now a museum honoring Emmett Till's life and educating the public about his murder. Duluth, Minnesota, where three black circus workers were lynched by a mob of an estimated 10,000 in 1920, dedicated a memorial to the men in 2003. The recent opening of the Whitney Plantation in Louisiana and the forthcoming National Black American Heritage Museum at the Smithsonian Institute also seem to point toward a public readiness to confront the sins of the nation's past, even as they persist in our present.

And yet, Marion is a place of selective memory. A few people have contacted Kaplan proposing to place a memorial there or to relocate ABHM in the town, but it has simply remained talk. Occasional visitors to the Marion Public Library and Grant County Museum come asking questions. Last August, I was one of them, when I visited on the 85th anniversary of the murders of Tommy Shipp and Abram Smith. Outside the genealogy room in the library, where some records of the lynching are housed, there was a modest exhibit of the history of the county. A dusty photo and display of James Dean, who was born in Marion, was showcased. Jim Davis, the illustrator who created the *Garfield* comic strip, also held a place of honor. That week, a small exhibit celebrating the heritage of notable black citizens of Marion, including Flossie Bailey, was also displayed. There was no mention of Cameron anywhere.

Perhaps Marion believes it can forget its greatest tragedy now that the only survivor and witness to the crime died 10 years ago. Marion today has endured a fate not dissimilar from many Rustbelt cities. Its population of approximately 30,000 has remained steady, but it bears the scars of economic depression. Foreclosed homes and empty lots stretch for blocks.

The grounds around the courthouse are still manicured and preserved. They are home to a boulder with a plaque honoring Martin Boots, the first white man to set foot in Marion, who later founded the county. The intersection of Third and Adams streets — where Smith and Shipp were lynched — is now a memorial to Grant County residents who died in the Vietnam War.

When I reached the intersection, I took out my camera. I had taken great care, making sure to charge the battery of my fancy SLR. Mysteriously, it didn't work. The once-charged battery was dead. Fate or coincidence would not let me mark the occasion.

A week later, when I met with Virgil in Milwaukee, I told him about my camera's malfunction, to which he responded with a knowing look. "You know the tree died, right?" he said.

Virgil continued to recall a family visit to Marion for an event for his father. "The impression that you get is that Marion ... the state that it's in, it has not progressed," he said. "It's got that stigma and I think that lynching has a lot to do with it." More people filled the café patio where we sat, their chatter bouncing off the canopy while wind rustled the leaves of trees nearby. Milwaukee weather, fickle as ever, brought a chill to the late August heat.

"Marion died because of that incident. It's just like something is hovering over that city." ●



Virgil Cameron and Reggie Jackson.

ID: 8991790

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taught historian and recipient of an honorary degree from the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, he founded ABHM in the 1980s. Cameron, who died 10 years after I met him, devoted his life to never letting America forget what happened to him, resolute in his belief that his life was spared to educate black and white Americans of the long, bloody, violent, and — ever ongoing — legacy of racism.

I was astounded. It was one thing to witness the brutal deaths of these young men. It was another thing to survive that nightmare and be staff, curator, historian, executive director, and living testament to it daily.

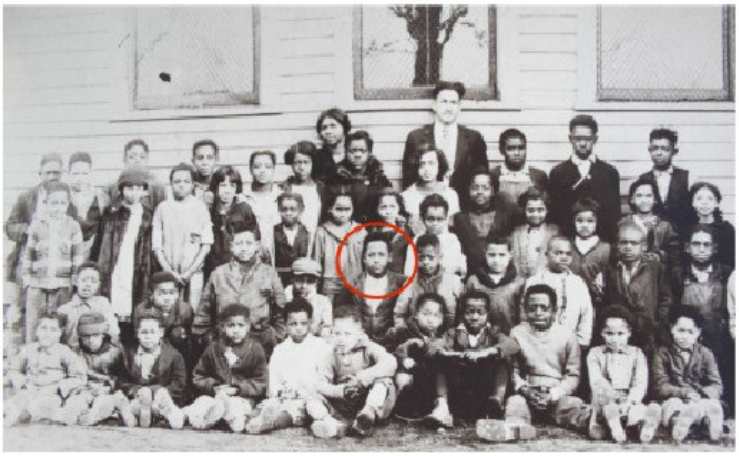
How do you wake up every day and bear witness to your own nightmare?



James Cameron in the America's Black Holocaust Museum.

ID: 8991041

James Herbert Cameron was born in La Crosse, Wisconsin, in 1914, the second of three children to James Cameron and Vera Carter. His family moved south to Birmingham, Alabama, and lived there until his parents separated in 1928, after which Cameron's mother moved him and his two sisters to Marion, a modest town of nearly 30,000 where black and white residents attended integrated schools, yet maintained segregated social spaces. (Much of Cameron's biography and his recollections in this story come from his memoir, *A Time of Terror*.)



Cameron, at about 14, with his school class in Marion.

ID: 8991559

In the summer of 1930, Marion, like much of the country, was experiencing a heat wave that compounded the effects of the Dust Bowl, and scores of people were out of work as the Depression began taking its toll. Cameron, then 16, spent the afternoon of August 6 with his buddies, Tommy Shipp and Abe Smith, pitching horseshoes in a field. It was Smith who convinced Cameron to join him and Shipp later that night to "stick up" unsuspecting couples in a secluded area of town known as "lovers' lane." The three teens drove there, armed, and attempted to rob Claude Deeter and Mary Ball, a young white couple. But Cameron recognized Deeter — he regularly shined Deeter's shoes in town and Deeter tipped well.

Cameron, who had been holding the gun, gave it back to Smith and ran. He heard shots in the distance. Shipp and Smith were arrested shortly after the shooting and allegedly named Cameron as the shooter. Officer Harley Burden, the only black officer on the Marion police force, found Cameron at his mother's home and took him into custody.

Once Cameron arrived at the Grant County Jail in the early morning hours of August 7, there were already groups of men waiting as word spread of the attack. Deeter was dead by early afternoon, and a police officer hung his bloody shirt in the window of city hall as a visible flag. But Deeter's death wasn't the principal outrage that wagged on everyone's tongues: His companion, Mary Ball, accused Shipp, Smith, and Cameron of rape (an allegation she'd later recant). It was this — the story of Ball's alleged assault told over and over — that incensed the white residents of Marion and surrounding towns. In his account of the day, *A Lynching in the Heartland*,

Indiana historian James Madison noted that local phone lines were clogged with callers discussing the alleged crimes of the three boys.



Grant County Courthouse.

ID: 8991433

For black residents of Marion, such as Katherine "Flossie" Bailey and her husband, Dr. Walter Bailey, it became clear that not only were Shipp, Smith, and Cameron in danger, but the town's entire black community was too. The Baileys were among Marion's most prominent black families. Walter was the only black physician in town and Flossie was the president of the state branch of the NAACP. In the aftermath of the arrests, they made every effort to rouse authorities to protect Marion — sending a cable to Gov. Harry Leslie, calling for the National Guard. They phoned the county sheriff, Jacob Campbell, several times demanding that he relocate the three teenagers, as well as seek additional support. Campbell rebuffed their calls and offered his assurances that the boys would be protected. Marion Mayor Jack Edwards, elected only a year prior at the tender age of 27, conveniently left town for "business." Meanwhile, other black Marion residents fled to neighboring Weaver, a mostly black community, to stay with relatives.

By 9 o'clock on the night of August 7, the mob had swelled to an estimated 15,000. The streets around the courthouse were blocked by crowds and cars. Campbell, who occupied the residence attached to the jail, moved his family to another part of town. "The thing I remember most vividly," his daughter later recalled, "was seeing so many people, women, standing out there in the crowd with little tiny babies in their arms just hollering, 'Get in there and get 'em, get in there and get 'em.'"

Mary Ball's father, Hoot, approached the jail entrance and demanded the keys. "Let us get the niggers," he told Campbell. "If this was your daughter, you would do the same as I am doing." From his second-floor cell, Cameron heard Campbell proclaim, "These are my prisoners. Go home!" Yet he was not comforted by the sheriff's declaration. "Perhaps I imagined it," he'd later write in his memoir, "but I could not detect a note of sincerity in his voice."



Cameron in the jail cell he occupied the night of the lynching.

ID: 8991169

The mob surged forward, some pummeling the jail with sledgehammers while others forced their way through the garage. When they breached the ground-floor walls, they snatched Tommy Shipp first from his cell. Mary Ball's sister purportedly watched from atop a car, encouraging the mob to wrap a rope around his neck and lynch him. He was already bruised and beaten when they strung him up on the maple tree at the corner of Third and Adams streets outside of the courthouse, diagonal from the jail. Shipp struggled to free the rope from his neck. The mob lowered him, broke both his arms, and pulled.

"I could see the bloodthirsty crowd come to life the moment Tommy's body was dragged into view."

ID: 8991722

Cameron surveyed the gruesome scene from his cell. "I could see the bloodthirsty crowd come to life the moment Tommy's body was dragged into view," he recounted in his memoir. "In a matter of seconds, Tommy was a bloody mass and bore no resemblance to any human being. The mob kept beating him just the same.

Even after the long, thick rope had been placed around his neck, fists and clubs still mauled him, and sticks and stones continued to pummel his body."

After the throng returned for Smith, they beat him with crude weapons, and a man impaled him with a pipe. Smith was dead before they tied the noose around his neck. Cameron heard the gleeful cries once the deed was done. Nauseous and drenched in cold sweat, he knew what was next.

"We want Cameron! We want Cameron!" he heard them chant. When a group of white men forced their way onto the second floor, the black men in his cell block made a fruitless attempt to hide and protect him. "Impulsively, I acted like I was going to give myself up when Big John and another Black man grabbed ahold of me and held me back," he wrote. "They had become too angry to remember their own fear — if they had any. But they were helpless and powerless to offer any kind of resistance to the mob. They stood with me."

When the mob threatened to lynch another boy, in jail with his father for hitching trains from the South to look for work, the father pointed to Cameron. "The nightmare I had often heard about happening to other victims of a mob now became my reality," Cameron wrote. "Brutally faced with death, I understood, fully, what it meant to be a black person in the United States of America."



Beitler's photograph of the August 7, 1930, lynching in Marion.

ID: 8991440

Cameron was punched and kicked as he was dragged from the jail's second floor to the maple tree. "I didn't rape anyone!" he howled over the din of the crowd. Half conscious, he felt the noose being wrapped around his neck. "The rope was handled so roughly it caused a rope burn," he wrote. "For a moment I blacked out. I recovered in a moment though, as they began shoving and knocking me closer to the tree under the limbs weighed down with the stripped bodies of Tommy and Abe."

Yet, just as Cameron prepared for the end, someone spoke up. In Cameron's retelling, a voice "rose above the deafening roar of the mob," speaking "sharp and crisp, like bells ringing out on a clear, cold winter day." The voice — "feminine" and "sweet" — delivered a simple instruction: "Take this boy back. He had nothing to do with any raping or killing."

A swift silence followed. "No one moved or spoke a word," Cameron wrote. "I stood there in the midst of thousands of people, and as I looked at the mob round me I thought I was in a room, a large room where a photographer had strips of film negatives hanging from the walls to dry. I couldn't tell whether the images on the film were white or black, they were simply mobsters captured on film surrounding me everywhere I looked."

The identity of whoever intervened — or whether anyone intervened at all — remains a mystery to this day. Cameron believed it could only have been the voice of God, though according to later accounts, some never even heard the "angelic" voice he described in his memoir. According to Madison, most of those who did claim to hear it said it was a man's voice, with some believing it was Mary Ball's uncle.

> "I suddenly found myself standing alone, under the death tree — mystified!"

ID: 8991731

Regardless, after what Cameron called a "brief eternity," "the roomful of negatives disappeared." "I found myself looking into the faces of people who had been flat images only a moment ago," he wrote. "I could feel the hands that had unmercifully beaten me remove the rope from around my neck. I suddenly found myself standing alone, under the death tree — mystified!"

As the crowd cleared a path between the tree and the jail, Cameron limped back, uttering a prayer with each step. No one laid a hand on him. When Cameron reached the steps of the jail, Sheriff Campbell took him by the

arm and led him to a police car with armed officers who immediately escorted him to a jail in Huntington, nearly 30 miles north of Marion. The following day, Cameron was moved 30 miles south of Marion to Anderson, Indiana, and the National Guard arrived in Marion, per Gov. Leslie's orders.

It would be after midnight that Lawrence Beitler would make his way to the courthouse square with his view camera and flash, in the thick and humid dark. Sheriff Campbell cut Shipp's and Smith's bodies down the next morning. Some Marion residents reportedly collected trophies from the murders: scraps of Smith's and Shipp's clothing, pieces of bark from the maple tree, and pieces of the lynching rope itself, an item that was highly coveted. Beitler stayed up for 10 days and nights to meet the demand for prints of his photograph, which he sold for 50 cents each. According to a 1988 *Marion Chronicle-Tribune* interview with his daughter, Betty, "It wasn't unusual for one person to order a thousand at a time."

ID: 8991443

From 1882 to 1968, 4,743 Americans — 3,446 of whom were black — were lynched, their deaths fueled by fears over miscegenation and perceived threats to white economic dominance. While the majority of lynchings did take place in the South, 128 black Americans were killed by Northern lynch mobs between 1880 and 1930. Between 1889 to 1930, 21 black people were lynched in Indiana alone.

Motivating many of these lynchings — and, in several cases, preventing law enforcement from stopping them — was the influence of the Ku Klux Klan. According to *A Lynching in the Heartland*, in 1920s Indiana, white, native-born Hoosiers joined the Klan in droves, feeling increasingly threatened by black migrants heading north from southern states. By 1925, membership peaked at 250,000 and encompassed more than 30% of the state's white male population, allegedly including then-Gov. Edward L. Jackson and other high-ranking officials in the state.

That all changed, however, in 1925, when Grand Dragon D.C. Stephenson was convicted for the rape and murder of an Indianapolis student. His highly publicized trial, paired with his implication in widespread state political corruption, quickly depleted membership. By 1930, the Indiana Klan ceased to be a public force, but the vestiges of its influence still pervaded local politics. While the Klan never claimed responsibility for the lynching of Shipp and Smith, it's highly probable that former members and sympathizers participated.

> From 1882 to 1968, 4,743 Americans were lynched.

ID: 8991739

Indiana state law already required law enforcement to protect prisoners from lynchings, and officers could have faced removal from office upon failure to do so. However, not once did Campbell fire a shot in an attempt to disperse the crowd. "If a shot had been fired, three or four hundred persons, including women and children, undoubtedly would have been killed," Campbell later told the *Indianapolis Times*. "One shot would have been the signal for slaughter."

"The sheriff and police completely laid down," Flossie Bailey wrote in an August 8 letter to Walter White, then executive secretary of the NAACP, "after assuring the Executive Board [of the NAACP] that every effort would be made to avert the tragedy." Bailey requested White's assistance to pressure state officials to investigate and send protection for the black residents of Marion. White arrived in Marion a week later to conduct his own investigation in tandem with the state's inquest, interviewing witnesses to try to determine the identity of leaders of the lynch mob. Though Beitler's photograph circulated widely, no one came forward to identify people to authorities.

Billy Connors, the manager of a theater near the courthouse, was one of the few white residents of Marion to rebuke local law enforcement's actions on the record. "I am going to tell you, that if what I understand is right — and I have heard a lot of talk — they knew something was going to happen," he told state investigators. "We are supposed to have a police force here ample to protect the city; why they were even allowed to gather I can't understand."

Ultimately, two trials were held in attempt to prosecute the ringleaders of the mob. Eight men were charged as inciters, in addition to Sheriff Campbell, who was charged with failure to protect Shipp, Smith, and Cameron.

However, by the end of March 1931, juries acquitted two of the alleged inciters and the state dropped its charges against Campbell and the other men for lack of evidence. Hoot Ball was never charged.

Cameron, having just survived his own lynching, faced a different fate. Though Mary Ball recanted her rape accusation, he was still charged as an accessory to Deeter's murder. Bailey secured Cameron two highly respected black lawyers from Indianapolis, who successfully filed a change of venue for his trial, moving it from Marion to Anderson, where Cameron had remained in jail since the day after the lynching. In July 1931, 11 months after the lynching, an all-white male jury in Anderson found him guilty of accessory before the fact to voluntary manslaughter. He was sentenced to up to 21 years in prison. Though he was eligible for parole after two years, he encountered delays from the parole board. One of the members, a rumored Klan member, was later discovered to have written letters protesting Cameron's release.

When Cameron was released in 1935, his mother and sisters stood outside the penitentiary to greet him. Now 21, he was a free man, resolved "to pick up the loose threads of [his] life, weave them into something beautiful, worthwhile and God-like."



Virgil Cameron outside of the old ABHM building in Milwaukee.

ID: 8991256

Virgil Cameron has the same kind yet intense eyes as his father. We met last August at a coffee shop on Milwaukee's East Side, a short walk from the Milwaukee River. At 74, he is a veteran of the Marine Corps and proudly sported a USMC snapback honoring his years of service in the 1960s. He was discharged in 1967 to help care for his father, who, decades after the near lynching, faced periodic health problems. As treasurer of the board of America's Black Holocaust Museum, Virgil has been the main family member to continue his father's work of educating Americans on the original sin of slavery and violence against black bodies.

His passion for history became striking as he told me little-known facts about the black life in Wisconsin — like that Milton, 70 miles southwest of Milwaukee, is home to an underground railroad site called the Milton House. "You go downstairs and there's a tunnel. You couldn't stand up, you had to crawl," he said. "It's amazing and it's here in Wisconsin."

Virgil, Cameron's third-oldest child, was born in 1942 in Detroit, where Cameron moved following his release from prison in 1935. Two years later, Cameron married Virginia Hamilton, a nurse, with whom he had five children: Virgil, three other sons, and one daughter. Shortly after Virgil was born, Cameron moved his young family back to Anderson, Indiana, the very same town where he was convicted, to be closer to his sisters and ailing mother. Now an adult and a father, Cameron cobbled together jobs, working for a time for the manufacturer Delco Remy and opening a shoe shine and convenience store in downtown Anderson in order to support his family.

While Anderson was socially segregated, Cameron's family seemed to be exempt from adhering to those norms. Virgil will never forget the time his mother and siblings went to the local movie theater and sat in the orchestra, rather than the segregated balcony where other black people would sit. When a white usher tried to force them to move, his mother refused, until a white manager ultimately intervened. 'Those are the Camerons," Virgil recalled him telling the usher. "Leave them alone." Cameron and his wife would go on to challenge the segregation policies of the theater, which eventually integrated rather than risking lawsuits.

Cameron and Virginia became prominent members of Anderson's black community in other ways, as well. Cameron served as president of the NAACP chapter in Madison County, where Anderson is located, and eventually founded four other chapters in the state. In 1942, Indiana Gov. Henry F. Stricker appointed Cameron as the state director of civil liberties, a position in which he investigated civil rights abuses and violations of equal accommodations law. Yet, according to Virgil, Cameron's commitment to civil rights work in Indiana was met with

lukewarm support from other black communities in the state, who worried his activism would create "trouble" for them. It also rankled some white people.

"I know he was getting threats, but we weren't really aware of it until we got older," Virgil said. "There was one day when a bunch of cars that pulled in front of the house and dad grabbed his rifle, and we went out with him. They were exchanging words and then the men pulled off."

Eventually, Cameron had faced enough threats, and he decided to move his family. He chose Milwaukee after an NAACP speaking engagement landed him there in 1950. At the time, the city was receiving a great influx of black Americans, who relocated from Southern towns and cities or, as in Cameron's case, Northern ones that practiced de facto segregation. The city's economy, teeming with blue-collar work and nice homes, seemed to hold ample opportunity for families like Cameron's to live the promise of the American dream.

And yet, Milwaukee — like all of America — was still unable to escape the vestiges of white supremacy. "It was a good environment, but if you were black, you were programmed to go to certain areas," Virgil said. Cameron's family lived in Bronzeville, the heart of the black community in northeast Milwaukee, which bustled with black-owned businesses, restaurants, and theaters. Virginia became a licensed practical nurse, while Cameron became a facilities manager at one of the city's large malls. Ever entrepreneurial, he also moonlighted with his own carpet-cleaning business, which Virginia helped manage. Together, they built up savings and provided a modest, middle-class life for their children."[They] had us all involved in music, sports," Virgil told me. "He always seemed to want us to expand our horizons."

Still, Cameron's activism didn't wane once he relocated to Milwaukee. An autodidact, he amassed a collection of some 15,000 books over the years, which supplemented his frequent trips to the Library of Congress. Cameron obsessively wrote and read, piecing together black American history, studying the origins of the transatlantic slave trade, the Civil War, and the Klan. He was vocal about racial discrimination wherever it manifested, writing columns for the local black papers, the *Milwaukee Courier* and the *Milwaukee Star,* as well as searing letters to the editor of the *Milwaukee Journal* and *Milwaukee Sentinel*. "Everybody was expecting to see his letter to the editor every week," Virgil said.

Cameron also dedicated himself to a project he had begun while he was still a teenager serving his sentence at the Indiana State Reformatory: writing a book about the night he was almost lynched. "He was constantly talking about this book, this manuscript," Virgil told me. Cameron would spend hours in the basement writing, provoking the curiosity of his young son. "I finally asked him one day, 'Dad, why are you always typing? What are you doing?'" Virgil recalled. "He said, 'I'll let you read it, son, when you are older.'"

Virgil was 12 when Cameron first let him read an early draft of the book chronicling his near murder. At the time, Virgil still hadn't fully grasped that the boy in the book was his own father. He thought it was someone else's story, possibly a work of fiction. He was in high school when he finally realized that it was Cameron who was spared from one of the most infamous lynchings in American history. "I felt that he was one ... lucky person," Virgil said. "There was an intervention that allowed him to live."



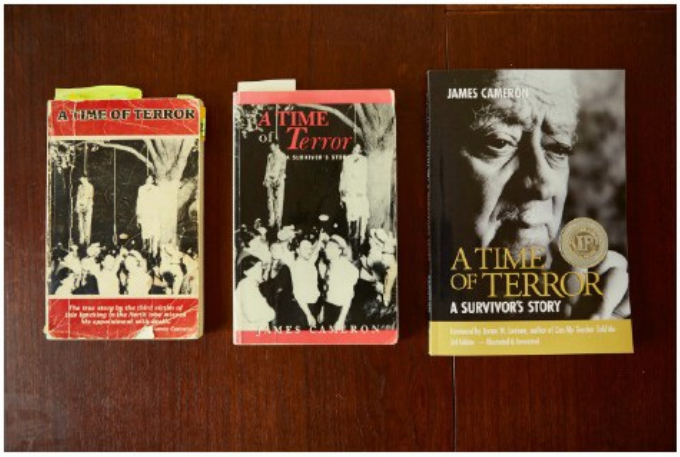
America's Black Holocaust Museum in Milwaukee.

ID: 8991331

It would be a 1979 church trip to Israel that would seed Cameron's idea to create a museum centered on the history of slavery in the United States and its evolution into a racialized caste system accompanied by violence and terror. Upon visiting Yad Vashem, it struck Cameron that the horrors endured by descendants of African slaves in the Americas shared some similarities to the Holocaust.

"It shook me up something awful," Cameron told journalist Cynthia Carr in 1993. (Carr later wrote a book confronting the possibility that one of the onlookers in Beitler's photo was her own grandfather.) "I said to my wife, 'Honey, we need a museum like that in America to show what happened to us black folks and the freedom-loving white people who've been trying to help us.'" He left with a vision and renewed purpose for why his own life was spared; he had survived to remember, to educate the nation.

For years, he sent his book manuscript to publishers, but no publisher seemed interested in publishing a first person account of a lynch mob survivor. (Cameron later told Carr that he rewrote the manuscript about "a hundred more times" and collected nearly 300 rejection letters.) In April 1980, *Ebony* published an excerpt of his memoir and dispatched a photographer who returned to Marion with him, documenting his visit. However, national exposure to his story still did not garner a willing publisher. Undeterred, Cameron took a second mortgage and self-published *A Time of Terror* in 1982. He printed 4,000 copies and sold them out of his trunk of his car at speaking engagements.



ID: 8991543

Cameron also self-published pamphlets — over 30 total — in which he drew upon his research and experiences to illuminate various cornerstones of white supremacy. In one from 1986 titled "Police Community Relations Among Blacks in Milwaukee, Wisconsin," Cameron protested many of the same issues being challenged today by the Black Lives Matter movement. "[The police] have been enemies of us black people since in their organization in the early 19th Century," Cameron wrote. "They can do nothing to alarm or silence me beyond murdering me. Even at that, they may rest assured that I protest it — even in the grave. I have been initiated since my time of terror at the age of 16. I am 72 years old now and destined, like all other nonwhites, to experience a time of terror to the grave."

Cameron's resolve to build a museum to commemorate and reconcile America's dark history intensified and by the late 1980s, he was able to secure — rent-free — a modest storefront on Atkinson Avenue, in a predominantly black neighborhood on Milwaukee's north side. The doors of America's Black Holocaust Museum opened ceremoniously on a Sunday in 1988: June 19, known as Juneteenth, commemorating the day in 1865 when Southern slaves in Texas were notified of their emancipation by executive order. Filled with books and artifacts Cameron had collected over the years in his basement, it was a monument to the legacy of lynching in the United States.



One of Cameron's pamphlets.

ID: 8991528

The location, however, was temporary, and as interest piqued within the community and more people came to visit, Cameron searched for a larger space to accommodate his vision for the museum. In 1992 — the year before Indiana Gov. Evan Bayh formally pardoned Cameron for his 1931 conviction — Cameron moved the museum to the old Braggs Boxing Gym, on Fourth Street and North Avenue in Bronzeville, which he acquired from the city of Milwaukee for $1. With the help of local leaders, Cameron was introduced to local Jewish philanthropist Dan Bader of the Bader Foundation. Though Cameron's use of the term "holocaust" had drawn criticism from some Milwaukee Jews, Bader was struck by Cameron's knowledge of the Shoah and the connections he drew between the persecution of Jews and the descendants of African peoples in America. According to Virgil, he wrote a check for $50,000 on the spot. (When asked about objections to the name in 2002, Cameron told the *Chicago Reader* that "[American] Indians also needed a

holocaust museum, and that ended any objections they had.")

The donation was crucial for beginning renovations to the old boxing building, where Cameron had already relocated the museum after some hasty, self-funded repairs. It also legitimized the project to additional foundation and grant support. Cameron's vision for the museum wasn't restricted to elucidating the horrors of lynchings. Rather, as with his pamphlets, he sought to educate Americans on the entire history of black people in America, connecting the legacy of slavery as the antecedent to cruel indignities endured by the children of the African diaspora. By the early 2000s, the museum received around 25,000 visitors a year. Cameron displayed objects he collected over the years, which included paraphernalia from lynchings, postcards, photographs from the Jim Crow era, newspaper clippings that depicted black Americans, caricaturized miniatures, and the wax installation of Beitler's photograph. In 1999, he also expanded the facility to host the traveling exhibition of the wreckage of the slave ship *Henrietta Marie*. However, it was always Cameron himself who was the biggest draw.

> "We need a museum like that in America to show what happened to us black folks and the freedom-loving white people who've been trying to help us."

ID: 8991747

Fran Kaplan met Cameron on an ordinary day in 1999. The granddaughter of Russian Jewish immigrants, she was born 70 miles away from Marion in Lafayette and had vague memories of hearing about lynching growing up. Cameron guided Kaplan and her son, who was visiting from out of town, through the museum's exhibits and finally to a seated area to screen the 1995 BBC documentary *Unforgiven: Legacy of a Lynching*, which retold the story of the night of August 7. In one scene, William Deeter, Claude Deeter's brother, tearfully embraced Cameron at a Marion church; it was the first time the two ever met. Both men exchanged words of forgiveness and faith. When the film ended, Kaplan recalled, Cameron came out to sit with them and talk. "I was just silent," Kaplan remembered. "[I] couldn't connect with him because I was so awed."

Patrick Sims was a graduate student in theater at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, when he first visited the museum in 1997. Now a vice provost for diversity at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, he recalled that he saw in Cameron's story parallels between his own encounters with police officers. "That could have been me. That could have been my grandfather," he said. His thesis, a one-person play based on Cameron's life called *10 Perfect: A Lynching Survivor's Story*, intentionally concluded with a reconstruction of Beitler's photograph. In performances, Sims occupied the spot where 16-year-old Cameron would have been lynched.

The project created space to share stories otherwise hidden. Sims learned that his own grandmother had aided a black man fleeing an angry mob of white men in rural Missouri. "Why are we not sharing these experiences?" he asked, noting how trauma can be unintentionally passed down between generations. "Why aren't we talking about these things?"

For some, however, there was a reticence to enter ABHM's doors. Lucas Johnson, 32, a lifelong Milwaukee resident, told me that he "always wanted to go, just never got around to it." Members of my own family have remarked about making a plan to visit but never did. I too shared some of this reticence. I supported the museum's existence in spirit, but dreaded the work of confronting America's ugly history of violence toward black people.

When I finally entered those doors, unaware that my August 1996 visit fell so close to the anniversary of Cameron's near murder, I had no idea what to expect. I don't remember most of the conversation. I do remember meeting a powerful and reserved spirit who showed me the rope from the lynching tree and other artifacts of racial bigotry. I didn't want to know any of it, but I understood that I *needed* to. I also felt psychic pain. I also felt gratitude. In a world that challenges the forward assertion of black life, I thought over and over, *Thank god he lived. Thank god. Thank god.*

Cameron at the Capitol in 2005.

ID: 8991395

In 2005, more than 105 years after federal anti-lynching legislation was first introduced to Congress, former Louisiana Sen. Mary Landrieu sponsored a resolution to formally apologize for the Senate's failure to pass anti-lynching laws that would have brought the men responsible for the deaths of Smith, Shipp, Till, and so many

Suspect taunting NYPD officers using lost or stolen police radio

By A.J. Ross
MIDTOWN, Manhattan (WABC) --

abc7ny.com

Monday, August 01, 2016 05:46AM

The NYPD is on alert after someone started making threats over a police radio.

NYPD dispatchers have been broadcasting warnings to patrols to use caution when responding to calls, after several unauthorized transmissions went out Saturday taunting the captain of the Midtown South Precinct.

How the person was able to communicate over several police radio frequencies is still being investigated.

Officers first responded to the numerous unauthorized calls around 5:42 p.m. Saturday, when an unknown man issued a page, and requested to speak directly the Captain of the Midtown South Precinct.

A dispatcher then tried to contact the captain, and minutes later, the seemingly innocent page quickly turned into a threat.

The suspect then asked over the radio if the captain remembered throwing him in jail, and said he was now coming to put a bullet in the captain's head.

He also claimed he was standing next to a strategic response vehicle in Times Square, and challenged the Sergeant to come find him. Minutes later, the suspect said he was inside the Walgreens at Times Square, but searches found nothing.

At this point, investigators are not sure if the person is using a lost or stolen police radio.

Officers were standing post outside the Midtown South Precinct with heavy tactical gear Sunday evening.

The NYPD is currently investigating this incident.
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Police: Man brandishes sword at ex-roommate over pizza rolls

Cary Ashby • Updated Today at 9:58 AM

norwalkreflector.com

http://norwalkreflector.com/Law-Enforcement/2016/07/26/Man-brandishes-sword-at-ex-roommate-over-pizza-rolls.html

Norwalk Police Department
cashby@norwalkreflector.com

A Norwalk man is accused of brandishing a sword at his ex-roommate when he was retrieving some food.

Travis C. Vartorella, 20, of 133 N. West St., Apt. A-2, was charged with aggravated menacing. If convicted of the first-degree misdemeanor, he faces up to six months in the Huron County Jail.

“The victim was a former roommate. He had moved out,” Norwalk Law Director Stuart O’Hara said.

The man returned to the North West Street apartment to retrieve his belongings Sunday. O’Hara said the victim was putting some items, which included pizza rolls, into a box when Vartorella reportedly brandished a sword.

“He said, ‘Leave my (expletive) pizza rolls alone,’” O’Hara said, quoting an officer’s report. “He also threatened to stab the victim with a pocket knife.”

The victim then called 9-1-1 at 5:33 p.m. According to the report, two of three responding Norwalk police officers were at the apartment in four minutes.

After the ex-roommate called 9-1-1, “the defendant gathered up his swords to hide them,” O’Hara said. The prosecutor noted police searched the apartment and seized the sword in question and three “edged weapons” from Vartorella’s bedroom as evidence.

Following a brief investigation at the scene, Vartorella was arrested, charged and transported to jail. He wasn’t in custody as of Monday afternoon.

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Tallahassee woman sees face in dessert bowl

Neil Coker, Democrat staff writer

tallahassee.com

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT
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Face in pie bowl

What do you see? A smear of frosting, the remnants of Key Lime pie... or a hidden face, a sign from beyond?(Photo: Debra Mitchell)

Tallahassee resident Debra Mitchell received a slice of life she hadn't expected as she enjoyed dessert Wednesday night. Looking down into her bowl of Key Lime pie, she was surprised to see what appeared to be a human face.

"I got up and turned my light on and the face appeared clear as day," said Mitchell, 55. "It didn't change form. It just stayed there."

Struck by her apparent discovery, Mitchell immediately sought guidance at a nearby house of worship, where she claims she was asked to leave after receiving prayer.

"I went next door to a church I'd never visited. These people didn't know who I was — they told me to leave. They told me it was demonic and that I needed to leave and have my house anointed."

It's an assessment that Mitchell disagrees with. The local woman believes the pattern in the smeared frosting to be a sign of the times.



(Photo: Democrat files)

Debra Mitchell, the Tallahassee woman who saw a face in her dessert bowl.

"America's in so much trouble and the first thing that came to mind was war. You can see the man crying."

Throughout the ages, people have perceived religious imagery in natural phenomena. Common images reported are that of Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary, who was famously spotted on a piece of toast in 2003. The decade-old toast eventually sold for $28,000 on eBay.

Mitchell confirmed that she finished eating the pie after seeing the image. The bowl has since been wiped clean.

Mitchell holds the now-clean bowl in which she perceived a pair of faces.



(Photo: Democrat files)

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Canandaigua Man Threatens Police With Sword | NewsRadio WIOD

Posted June 29th, 2016 @ 1:06pm

iheart.com

http://wiod.iheart.com/articles/weird-news-104673/canandaigua-man-threatens-police-with-sword-14862974

NewsRadio WIOD - Miami's News, Traffic and Weather Station 24/7



Canandaigua Man Threatens Police With Sword

A Canandaigua man has been arrested on menacing charges after he allegedly threatened police with a sword.

Canandaigua police say officers went to the man's home on West Gibson Street around dawn today.

That's where Joseph Cavanaugh was allegedly holding a woman and the sword.

The woman broke free, and police say Cavanaugh approached the officers and unsheathed the sword.

He was stopped with a Taser. More charges are pending.

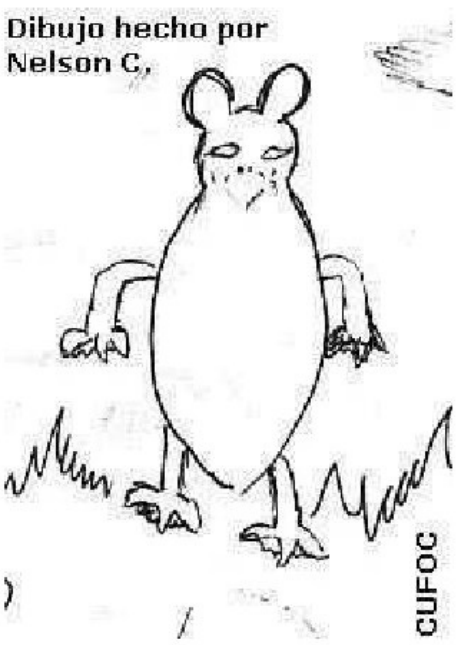
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Telepathic Football

The **Telepathic Football** was a very bizarre cryptid reportedly sighted on January 12, 2002 by Jean F. and Nelson C, residents of one of the parcels of the central area of Villa San Rafael in Calama, Chile. It all began when Jean noticed that his pet snake escaped from its cage. His friend Nelson noticed it was gone, so they began looking for it outside among the rubble of the parcel. They recall how half an hour before, their two dogs strangely began to howl and cry.

They searched for the pet snake together when suddenly, at about 30 meters from where they stood, they saw what appeared to be a stray dog. They immediately picked up rocks to throw at it to avoid an attack. However, to their surprise, the animal stood there, motionless and fearless; it did not get scared nor it ran away as ordinary dogs normally do. Shortly afterwards, the strange animal began to move towards them. The movements it made as it walked were very strange. It used two legs at a time. It made very small and short leaps like a rabbit. Suddenly, it stopped and it stood up on two legs. The teenagers shortly began to feel some kind of energy. "It was like an electrical shock in the stomach," they said. It later walked again (upright) making a loud dragging noise, making small leaps and only moving one of its legs. They thought that it might have been hurt after they threw rocks at it. They noticed the weird shape of the animal. "It was like a rugby football with legs," one of them said.

Telepathic Football



An eyewitness sketch

Background

Type	Cryptid
Continent	South America
Country	Chile
One-Time?	Yes
Theories	• Cryptid • Extraterrestrial

Appearance Edit

Nelson was mesmerized as he stared at such strange-looking animal. He remembers a detailed description of it. According to him, its head was like the one of a large dog and it had a flat nose like a bulldog. Its eyes were slanted and pale-red in color, which could only be seen when the creature turned its head from side to side like small lizards do.

Its ears were flat, round and large. Its arms were short, they had elbows and the hands had three fingers. It had hair like the one on a wild pig. Its legs were like the ones from a goat. The feet had also three fingers and a membrane like ducks, but somewhat shorter. He does not recall seeing nails because the grass was covering the tip of the fingers.

On its curved back, they were able to notice a spinal section covered with amounts of even thicker hair. According to the teenagers, the "thicker" hairs grew in small separated sections or groups down the spinal area and they pointed downwards. Most of the hair of the animal was gray, but the tail had a white tip. The tail appeared to be three times ticker than the one on a

dog but it was very short; it was about 5 centimeters in length.

Possible Explanations Edit

There are several explanations as to what the creature could be. Theories include:

- An undiscovered species (a Cryptid)
- Extraterrestrial

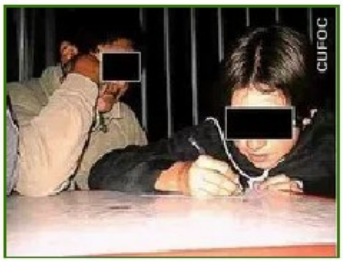
THE HOME OF FANDOM Games Movies TV Explore Wikia Search ObscUrban Legend

- At that moment, Nelson claims that he heard a voice in his head saying, "don't stare, just run away."
- These testimonies were taken separately from the teenagers, and yet, both accounts concurred entirely.

v · e · d	Cryptids	[Expand]
v · e · d	South America	[Expand]



An eyewitness sketch



The two witnesses

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LIFESTYLE

Telepathic Football Threatens Chilean Teens - NCBuy.com Weird News ncbuy.com

http://www.ncbuy.com/news/20020124/0-telepathic-football-threatens.html

BREAKING STORIES & HEADLINES ...
NCBuy's worldwide newsdesk reporting

Villa San Rafael, Chile -- Forget Bigfoot or the Mothman. The newest paranormal creature is a four-legged football.

Believe it or not, a creature matching that exact description has been sighted threatening teenagers in Villa San Rafael, Chile.

Researchers at the Calama UFO Center in Chile claim the mysterious menace has wings, a face like a large bulldog and is "shaped like a rugby football with legs."

Paranormal researcher Dr. Virgilio Sanchez-Ocejo isn't sure if the creature is one of those goat-sucking chupacabras, but admits both animals telepathically communicate with humans.

The winged football is just one of hundreds of strange creatures that have been terrorizing Chile since 1999 and Dr. Sanchez-Ocejo suspects the mysterious beings are entering Chile through a dimensional doorway.

More Weird News From 2002-01-24
The day's stories from around the world.

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Lifestyle › Tech › Features

Who is Teresa Fidalgo? Debunking the fake ghost story that's got Instagram spooked

Young girl didn't die on a mountain road and she isn't going to kill you with social media

Christopher Hooton | @christophhooton | Monday 30 June 2014 | 0 comments



Teresa Fidalgo originates in the video 'A Curva' *David Rebordao*

It seems that the internet's love of nostalgia extends beyond just pop culture, with the Slender Man and copy paste ghost stories like Teresa Fidalgo getting a second wind this year, but how did the dead girl tale start and is there a shred of truth to it?

"I am Teresa Fidalgo and if you don't post this on 20 other photos I will sleep with you forever," the quote spammed at the bottom of thousands of Instagram pictures this week somewhat ambiguously warns.

"A girl ignored and her mom died 29 days later. You can even search me on google." (sic)

Indeed you can search Teresa on Google, though her extensive search results aren't tantamount to her physical existence but more a catalogue of various regurgitations and reworkings of a story that originates with Portuguese producer David Rebordão's viral video 'A Curva'.

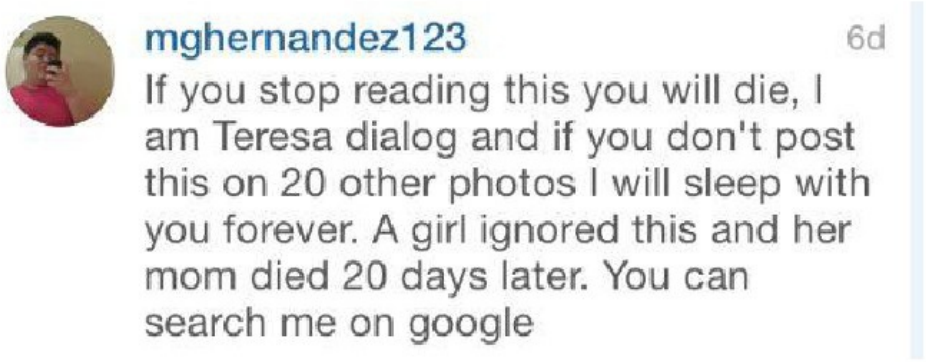


Aping Blair Witch Project, the found footage short sees a car of friends driving in the mountains when they pick up a hitchhiker going by the name Teresa Fidalgo.

Mostly silent, the new passenger eventually points to a spot in the road ahead of the car where she "died", with the camera panning back to her to show her face suddenly bloody before the car crashes.

While numerous White Lady stories like this have been dreamt up over the years, something about the specificity of 'Teresa

Fidalgo' and her supposed (but definitely phony) links to a real accident that occurred on a Portuguese road have caught the imagination of easily-scared teenagers.



Teresa Dialog: Even ghosts are blighted by auto-correct

If common sense doesn't prevail when it comes to the idea of there being a teenage ghost with the supernatural ability to haunt people through social media though, and the fact she is subject to

by on one pic) doesn't diminish her story in any way, take solace in the fact that Rebordão has admitted that the story is fake.

The director told Channel TVI he was very surprised by the story's success and longevity, and is trying to find funding to make new scripted films.

COMMENTS

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Texas Court Says Citizens Can Skip Education If They Believe The Rapture Is Coming (DETAILS)

By **Georgia Bristow** - June 26, 2016 - http://bipartisanreport.com/2016/06/26/texas-court-says-citizens-can-skip-education-if-they-believe-the-rapture-is-coming-details/

In Texas, it's apparently completely fine for parents to not teach their children anything, or send them to school at all, because they are waiting on Jesus to show up.

On Friday, the Texas Supreme Court ruled in favor of a family that had been accused of not teaching their children anything because they were waiting to be "raptured." The fact that home-schooled kids should be properly educated was never addressed. The all-Republican court decided 6-3 in the family's favor on technical grounds.

In the state of Texas, there is no requirement for parents who choose to home-school their children to register with the state. Of course, there are "basic educational goals" that families must meet, including reading, spelling, grammar, math, and citizenship. However, there are absolutely no procedures taken, such as testing, to actually prove that the children are being taught or making progress. It seems that these educational goals are just friendly suggestions.

According to court filings, Laura and Michael MacIntyre used to educate their nine children at the family's motorcycle dealership in El Paso, Texas in an empty office. Problems for them arose when an uncle told the local school district that he never saw the children do anything educational. The uncle also overheard the children telling one of their cousins that "they did not need to do schoolwork because they were going to be raptured."

The oldest daughter of the McIntyre's, Tori, age 17, ran away in 2006 so that she could return to school. According to ABC News, the school district wasn't sure she could handle any classwork harder than the 9th grade level work, and she was placed in 9th grade as a result.

An attendance officer, Michael Mendoza, attempted to investigate the accusations made against the McIntyre family. In response, the family sued, saying that their equal protection rights under the 14th Amendment were violated and that the school district was being anti-Christian.

The McIntyres claimed that they used Christian curriculum that is similar to that which is offered in Christian schools in El Paso. They also said that the uncle had lied about the "rapture" comments because he was involved in a dispute related to the ownership of the now non-existent motorcycle dealership.

According to the high court, the 14th Amendment claims were not for Texas' educational code to question.

Justice John Devine, referring to the state's education commissioner, Mike Morath, said:

> *'WHETHER THEIR CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS WERE VIOLATED REMAINS TO BE DECIDED, BUT IT IS A QUESTION THE COURTS — NOT THE COMMISSIONER — MUST DECIDE.'*

The McIntyre's attorney, Chad Baruch said:

> *'I THINK MY CLIENTS WOULD LOVE FOR THERE TO BE SOME CLARIFICATION AS TO THE LIMITS ON THE SCHOOL DISTRICT'S POWER TO DEMAND INFORMATION FROM HOME-SCHOOL FAMILIES. BUT THEY RECOGNIZE THAT'S DOWN THE LINE.'*

Despite their ruling in favor of the family, the Texas Supreme Court did agree with the lower court that Mendoza did not violate 14th amendment protections when he went out to investigate.

The Ghost Blimp

ODDLY HISTORICAL



An L-8 blimp.

Ghost ships have been a facet of history since humans first began to explore the world's vast oceans. Vehicles lost under mysterious circumstances, ghost ships evoke a sense of mystery and loss. One such lonely vessel haunted the Arctic for decades, before being lost to the endlessly churning icebergs. There are hundreds of similar stories, ships and crews lost to the enigmatic waters.

But ships are not the only vehicles that can become ghosts. One of the strangest stories of ghostly vehicles comes out of World War II. Blimps were used for a variety of purposes during the war, from reconnaissance to anti-submarine patrols to protection from dive bombers. They were useful because they could hover in place for long time periods and could also fly for long distances without needing to refuel.

In 1942, one such blimp, an L-8, went on a patrol off the California coast, never to return. What happened to the blimp, and her crew, remains an enduring mystery to this day.

A foggy morning

The morning of Sunday, August 16, 1942 was a foggy one. When the Navy blimp was set to take off from Treasure Island, her crew was reduced from three to two, owing to the increased weight caused by the mist that had settled on the skin of the balloon. So, Lt. Ernest DeWitt Cody, the pilot, and Ensign Charles E. Adams took off that day, while Aviation Machinist's Mate Third Class James Riley Hill remained on the ground. The decision would save Hill's life.

When the L-8 took off on its anti-submarine patrol, everything seemed normal. An hour and a half into the flight, Lt. Cody radioed back to base saying that they had seen a possible oil slick that warranted investigation. No further communications were heard from the doomed blimp.

At 11:15, witnesses saw the blimp floating in from the ocean, near San Francisco. The blimp drifted further to Daly City, where it was losing altitude. It hit a bluff, and dropped a depth charge on a golf course. It hit roofs and a car before settling down on Bellevue Avenue. When rescuers rushed to assist the stricken crew, they found the cabin empty.

An enduring mystery

Investigators found that the life raft and parachutes were still in the cabin. The life jackets were missing. For some unknown reason, the pilot had set the motor to idle, and propped open the door. The radio still worked, so there was a mystery as to why, if something went wrong, the pair didn't call for help. Some believed that they were captured by an enemy submarine. Others believed the crew got into some sort of fight and fell out of blimp. Still another story was that one member of the crew fell and accidentally pulled his would be rescuer down into the ocean.

Whatever the case, neither man was ever found, and they were officially declared dead. The blimp continued to serve in the Navy as a training vessel. After the war, it was returned to Goodyear, where it was put into storage before eventually being rebuilt in 1968 as one of the famous Goodyear Blimps, where it flew over Houston, Texas until it was retired in 1982.

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By Greg Newkirk on 07/16/2016 weekinweird.com



Week In Weird

The Vampire Graves of Jewett City: The Legend of Connecticut's Undead, Blood-Sucking Vampire Family

Every town has its mysteries, but some places hold secrets far more bizarre than others. Take Jewett City, Connecticut, a small city that's home to 3500 people.. and a handful of vampires.

The strange tale of the Jewett City Vampires begins in the middle of the 1800s, when a local family began to notice that they were falling victim to a strange illness. Henry Ray and his three sons were slowly wasting away, each day a bit weaker than the last, almost as if something was visiting them in the night, sucking the life force from their bodies. The family attempted everything they could to diagnose the men, but despite their efforts, their relatives continued to die, thin and frail, shadows of their former selves.

In May of 1853, the family held a meeting. The Rays believed that the undead were stalking the countryside, targeting the farming community, and feeding on victims in the dead of night, turning their friends and family members into foul creatures who would rise from the grave and do the same. Fearing the return of their brothers, the Ray family marched to the local cemetery, exhumed the bodies of their dead, and set them ablaze. When the flames died down, the vampire hunters rearranged the bones, then re-buried the bodies, this time for good.

The drastic measures seemed to work. As the years wore on, the mysterious illness began to slowly disappear, and the countryside was once again safe from the threat of the undead.

Despite their exhumation being witnessed by a huge crowd, even written about in the local newspaper, the tale of the Jewett City Vampires was chalked up as nothing more than a folk tale. Then, in the early 90s, some local kids made a startling discovery that changed all that.

Two boys from the nearby town of Hopeville were sliding down a gravel bank when they noticed they had kicked up some strange, round objects with their feet. Those objects turned out to be skulls. The boys reported their find to their parents, who called the city, and within days, archaeologists had discovered an unmarked cemetery. One grave, though, was particularly interesting.

Hidden inside a coffin marked "JB-55" was the body of a man who had been completely dismembered, his skull pulled from his spine and placed in his chest cavity, his femurs crossed in an "X" just below his skull. It had all the identifying marks of the local legends: this body had belonged to a vampire.

Local researchers believed that the man had been disinterred five years after his burial in the late 1700s, and his bones rearranged in order to prevent him from returning from the grave. It was the first real evidence that the Connecticut vampire scourge was more than a legend.

The thought that blood-sucking, undead creatures may have roamed the New England countryside is a chilling one, but there's no reason to stock up on garlic and start whittling wooden stakes. As it

turns out, the rash of vampire-killings that spread through Connecticut can be chalked up to a lack of modern medical knowledge.

Analysis of the disorganized bones discovered in the mysterious "JB-55" coffin show signs of a disease commonly referred to as "consumption" at the time. Had these "vampire attacks" occurred several decades later, the locals would have realized that the only thing ravaging the farming community of Jewett was tuberculosis.

Today, those visiting the Jewett City Cemetery can still see the graves of the "vampires" that caused such a widespread panic throughout the state, and, if you're feeling particularly morbid, you can even stand in the very spot they were exhumed, burned, and dismembered.

On second though, maybe you should bring some holy water. Just in case.



Greg Newkirk

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Psychology of conspiracy belief

stuff.co.nz

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MATT STEWART .

Last updated 05:00, December 13 2014

A Professor of psychology from Victoria University sheds some light on the conspiracy theories surrounding illuminati.

You don't have to be mad to create conspiracy theories, but it certainly helps, new research suggests.

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Just believing in them indicates you are more likely to be paranoid or mentally ill, a Victoria University study shows.

Widely held conspiracy theories range from harmless ones, such as the belief that the Moon landings were faked, to more dangerous delusions such as the one in Nigeria that polio vaccines were a Western plot to sterilise people. That led to vaccination crews being murdered and thousands dying from disease.

Clinical psychologist Darshani Kumareswaran is delving in to the psychology of conspiracy belief, and has found some believers are likely to endorse far-fetched plots in an effort to make sense of chaotic situations beyond their control.

Kumareswaran, who graduated from Victoria with a PhD in psychology this week, wanted to find out what made people more likely to believe in, or come up with, conspiracy theories - and whether the process was linked to mental illness.

Avid conspiracy theorists can put themselves under intense psychological strain with their tendency towards paranoid thinking and delusional beliefs, causing mental strain even when a conspiracy theory turns out to be a verified plot.

She also looked behind the common public image of the conspiracy theorist as a crackpot.

Despite evidence of verified conspiracies, such as the Watergate scandal, the public viewed conspiracy theorists in as negative a light as they did convicted criminals, she said.

"For the label to be so negatively rated by the public is quite a powerful finding."

Study participants were asked to recall a situation in which they had no control, describe it in detail, and write it down. They were then put in a "psychological space" in which they felt powerlessness and were given 24 pictures that looked like snowy television screens.

Half featured obscured objects such as a chair or tent, the other half nothing.

Those who scored highly on a form of psychopathology known as schizotypy were more likely to see an object in the images where there was none, indicating they were more likely to make connections between unrelated things.

"I also found that someone who creates conspiracy theories is more likely to have some form of psychopathology, or mental illness such as paranoid thinking, compared to those who believe in

conspiracy theories but do not create them, or people who do not believe in them at all," she said.

Psychology professor Marc Wilson said the research countered the common stereotype that people who believed conspiracy theories were characterised by extreme paranoia.

"The relationship between psychopathology and paranoia is quite weak. The really interesting thing is that people tend to assume that paranoia is a root cause of conspiracy when it isn't the smoking gun," he said.

Wayan Rosie is a member of the Fluoride Action Network, a lobby group whose critics accuse it of promoting the conspiracy theory that fluoridated water is an unsafe method of mass medication.

Rosie does not believe fluoride is put in the water supply as a form of mind control, or to keep the population docile, but he is suspicious about why it is used here when much of Europe's water is fluoride-free.

He said Kumareswaran's research rang true. "People can get hung up on these conspiracy theories and they can become paranoid and suspicious - I know lots of people who believe in conspiracy theories and they end up like that."

Vicki Hyde, former chair-entity of the New Zealand Skeptics, cited a catalogue of 2000 people whose belief in conspiracy theories had caused a catalogue of suffering including death, prosecution, imprisonment, disease and poverty.

"There's a correlation between fragile mental states and the cultural context of conspiracy theories - being paranoid doesn't mean they aren't out to get you, but in most cases they really really aren't.

"Occasionally conspiracy theories may be true, so you need to be vigilant - but not so much that you put your mental health at risk. It needs balance."

FIVE CONSPIRACY THEORIES THAT JUST WON'T GO AWAY:

***9/11 was an inside job:** This one claims the events of September 11, 2001, were part of a US government coverup orchestrated by George W Bush and his cronies. 9/11 "truthers" believe the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon were a smokescreen used to justify the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan, curtail civil liberties and further the interests of the military-industrial complex.

No men on the Moon: The claim that a series of manned Moon landings in the late '60s and early '70s were an elaborately staged hoax orchestrated by Nasa and other shadowy figures. Up to 20 per cent of Americans still believe the Moon landings were faked.

Paul McCartney has been dead for years: Some Beatles fans insist the Macca we know is actually a lookalike, brought into the band after the real Paul died in 1966. The clues apparently are hidden on album covers or in lyrics. The Beatles denied it. But then, they would, wouldn't they?

Pop puppets: The belief that the Illuminati - a secret elite order - uses CIA mind control methods to turn pop stars into robotic slaves. This theory holds that the likes of Lady Gaga and Beyonce are controlled by handlers and that their music videos are full of Illuminati cult imagery that primes the masses for a takeover by a Satanic New World Order.

Reptile reign: Reptilian shapeshifters control the universe from a parallel plane of universal consciousness - and they include Prime Minister John Key. Earlier this year Key's office received an Official Information Act request asking it to disprove the theory that Key was a "shapeshifting reptilian alien ushering humanity towards enslavement". It couldn't.

- The Dominion Post

Emailnewstips@stuff.co.nz

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Ken McElroy and the Town That Kept Silent

http://www.oddlyhistorical.com/2016/03/13/killing-ken-mcelroy/



The Grave of Ken McElroy By Bos174 (Took picture at cemetery) [GFDL (http://www.gnu.org/copyleft/fdl.html) or CC BY-SA 3.0 (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0)], via Wikimedia Commons

Life in small town America is increasingly romanticized as more and more Americans move to cities. Pop culture likes to portray rural hamlets as idyllic places with quirky citizens who are full of homespun wisdom, getaways where the materialistic city dweller can vacation away from their stressful urban lifestyle and maybe learn a few life lessons while they're at it.

While there is perhaps some truth to this, another trope about small towns is that they all harbor deep, dark secrets whose truths are not easily discovered. After all, small towns are in reality large families, with a sense of identity that comes from close kinship among its members. Secrets die hard when a community closes ranks and refuses to talk.

Skidmore, Missouri was just such a town. On July 10, 1981, the town's most notorious member, Ken Rex McElroy, was gunned down in broad daylight in front of thirty or forty townspeople. More than 30 years later, authorities are no closer to solving the mystery of who pulled the trigger.

Skidmore's Town Bully

Ken McElroy was the terror of Skidmore. A big man with a bad temper and no conscience, he did as he pleased and if anyone had the audacity to get in his way, he didn't hesitate to resort to violence. His reign of terror over the 437 residents of Skidmore lasted for decades. From assault, to rape, to theft, McElroy was such a prolific criminal that his attorney, Richard McFadin, claimed to have defended his client from upwards of three felony convictions a year. McElroy, who never seemed to be hurting for money despite never holding down a job, paid his attorney in cash whatever amount was necessary to stay out of jail.

The strategy seemed to work, because despite a laundry list of crimes, law enforcement could never make any charges stick to McElroy. It seemed that the bully would continue to terrorize Skidmore Indefinitely. That is, until McElroy tried to murder the local grocer, the elderly Bo Bowenkamp, over some candy.

Trena McElroy, Ken's wife, told her husband that Lois Bownenkamp, the grocer's wife, had accused their daughter of stealing candy. Mrs. Bowenkamp tried to soothe the hurt feelings by explaining away the incident as a misunderstanding, but Ken McElroy, never one to let matters drop, offered the elderly woman money to fight Trena McElroy over the dispute. When she refused, McElroy camped out in his pickup truck outside the Bowenkamp's home at night, on two occasions firing his shotgun into the air.

One July night in 1980, McElroy took the dispute to dangerous proportions. Bo Bowenkamp stood on the loading dock of his grocery store, waiting for a repairman. McElroy pulled up in his pickup truck, pulled out his shotgun, and unloaded a round of buckshot at the elderly grocer. The round tore through Bowenkamp's neck, and the old man collapsed. McElroy fled the scene, but was picked up later that night by State Troopers. Bowenkamp survived his wounds. The town was outraged by the attack, calling for justice. McElroy would subsequently go to trial, but justice grinds slow, and the bureaucratic court system would once again fail Skidmore, setting the stage for an act of vigilante justice that remains unsolved to this day.

Skidmore's Reckoning

Ken McElroy received a two year sentence for shooting Bowenkamp. McFadin put in an appeal, and much to Skidmore's dismay, McElroy was freed on bond. He showed up in the D&G Tavern with a rifle, telling the bar dwellers that he intended to finish the job he started the previous year. Carrying the rifle violated his bond, and several witnesses agreed to testify. But once again McElroy was able to duck his comeuppance, because his lawyer was able to postpone the bond hearing. Skidmore was infuriated, and some among the villagers decided enough was enough.

On Friday July 10, 1981, Ken and Trena McElroy drove into town in Ken's signature pickup truck. McElroy pulled up in front of the bar and went inside for some cigarettes. A large crowd gathered, including patrons from the bar. McElroy started his truck and lit a cigarette. Shots cracked through the morning stillness, coming from both in front of and behind the truck. McElroy was struck several times in the head and neck. No one called for an ambulance, and when sheriff's deputies arrived, no one but Trena said they saw anything. The wall of silence went up that day, and to this day it remains standing.

More than thirty years have passed since that July morning when Skidmore gunned down its most notorious citizen. Those years have not been kind to Skidmore—its population has shrunk by nearly half, and the local grocery, the bar and the gas station have all closed down. Many of the protagonists in this strange story have moved on or passed away. Meanwhile, the murder of Ken McElroy remains an open case, one that law enforcement will not solve anytime soon.

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This entry was posted in Criminals, Killers, and Scam Artists, Mysteries and Strange Occurrences and tagged Ken McElroy, murder, Skidmore, vigilante justice on March 13, 2016 by Andrew Kincaid.

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The Witch Report 1600—Yorkshire headed the list

phys.org

http://phys.org/news/2016-06-witch-1600yorkshire.html

June 8, 2016



The Witch Report 1600 -- Yorkshire headed the list

Credit: University of Huddersfield

Was 1600s Yorkshire a good place to be a witch? A history researcher at the University of Huddersfield has been finding out, and her investigations have resulted in a new online article.

In England as a whole there were 2,000 arraignments for witchcraft between 1560 and 1706. But many were acquitted and just 300 were executed, meaning that the country escaped the full frenzy of the witch hunts that took place in other parts of Europe.

"Belief not only varied from country to country, but also from county to county," according to Amelia Sceats in her article, which appears in the new issue of *Postgraduate Perspectives on the Past*, the University's journal for standout work by postgraduate students of history, heritage and archaeology.

"On the surface, Yorkshire did not have a witch hunt, even though the Pendle witch trials of 1612 took place nearby," continues Amelia. But she did discover that there was a greater propensity in Yorkshire than in other regions to believe in the existence of covens of witches.

For example, she has analysed a 1621 book titled Deamonologia, written by Edward Fairfax, who lived in Knaresborough. He was a highly-cultivated gentleman... but he believed in witches and that a group of six women had bewitched his daughters.

"This shows that Fairfax believed in covens, organised groups of witches - an idea that was not as popular in the rest of England," writes Amelia in Belief, Influence and Action: Witchcraft in Seventeenth-Century Yorkshire.

The women accused by Fairfax and his daughters were acquitted at York Assizes, and Deamonologia was the indignant response. Fairfax believed he had been treated unfairly and that "hardness of heart" meant judges did not believe his daughters.

He repeated his witchcraft accusations in the book and for this he could have been sued for defamation. Amelia discovered that between 1600 and 1700 a substantial number of people in Yorkshire claimed compensation for loss of their reputation after they had beaten accusations of witchcraft.

Sometimes those accusations were made for fraudulent purposes. For example, landowners might use witchcraft as an excuse to evict tenants. "In these cases, the Yorkshire gentry were able to use the courts to their advantage by accusing those of lower status than themselves," writes Amelia.

But the common people were well aware of this tactic and in Yorkshire there were many examples

of petitions being got up in support of the accused.

The main argument of the article is that attitudes towards witchcraft depended on social class. The educated elite had a powerful influence over the legal system and without their belief in witchcraft, persecutions could not have taken place, argues Amelia, who also analyses the impact made by James I, a keen believer in witches, when he came to the throne in 1603.

The elite were more concerned with the idea that there was "a very real evil on earth", but "the commons concerned themselves with a witch's practical deeds, such as the cursing of livestock and crops", according to the article. But while they had religious faith, common people "also took part in folk rituals and superstitious rites which were denounced by their superiors".

The article also deals with topics such as the searches made on the bodies of supposed witches for unnatural marks and other ordeals that they underwent.

Amelia, who is aged 21 and from Cleckheaton, graduated in history at the University of Huddersfield in 2015. Her Perspectives article is drawn from her BA dissertation. She is currently completing a Masters by Research in which she examines attitudes towards mental illness in the Tudor period. Her plan then is to study for a PhD, this time concentrating on the experience of being a woman accused of witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England.

Explore further: Deadly witch hunts targeted by grassroots women's groups

More information: Amelia Grace Sceats, Belief, Influence And Action: Witchcraft In Seventeenth-Century Yorkshire, *Postgraduate Perspectives on the Past* (2016). DOI: 10.5920/ppp.2016.216

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Provided by: University of Huddersfield

Nostalgia: Time of religious uncertainty

thescarboroughnews.co.uk

http://www.thescarboroughnews.co.uk/nostalgia/nostalgia-time-of-religious-uncertainty-1-7955551



Dr Jack Binns

08:00Tuesday 14 June 2016

The word “witch” is probably derived from the Old English “wicca” which means sorcerer, though the two have different meanings. Witchcraft was thought to be an innate power, inherited from or conferred by the Devil, whereas sorcery is the use of spells or charms which may be damaging or beneficial. Anyone can become a sorcerer by learning and practice: you have to be born a witch or a wizard.

There was also a crucial difference between a white or good witch and a black or wicked witch. White witches were also known as “cunning folk” or “wise men”, who might cure the sick, find lost articles, or protect the house and its occupants against evil spirits.

On the other hand, black witches used their devilish powers to do harm to people or animals, taking revenge on those they thought had ill-treated or insulted them.

Writing in 1608, in his pamphlet “A Disclosure of the Damned Art of Witchcraft”, William Perkins identified several kinds of witches, good and bad: those who dealt only with charms and relics; necromancers, who exhumed corpses and used them to foretell the future; ventriloquists, “hollow voices”, who conversed with spirits of the dead; and the malicious ones who used poison to kill their victims.

However, in 1621, in his widely-read “Anatomy of Melancholy”, Robert Burton gave his own “scientific” explanation of the practice and belief in witchcraft:

“Sorcerers are too common; cunning men, wizards and white witches, as they call them, are in every village; which, if they be sought unto, will help all infirmities of body and mind.”

As for witches, old age, infirmity and depression played tricks with the minds of credulous women:

“All those extraordinary powers which old witches were supposed to exercise and pretend to possess; such as bewitching cattle to death, riding in the air upon a coulstaffe [broomstick], flying out of the chimney top, transforming themselves into various forms of cats and other animals; transporting their bodies from place to place...and other “supernatural solicitings” of the like kind, are all ascribed to the corrupted fancy, which is engendered by that morbid melancholy matter, attendant upon moping misery and rheumed age.”

The truth is that in a time of religious uncertainty and extremism, ordinary folk were unable to see the difference between religious belief, “science”, magic, pagan superstition and customary tradition.

For instance, on the eve of St Helen's Day, it was the habit to gather branches of the mountain or ash or rowan tree and place them over house door lintels, barns and even bed heads to ward off bad luck or evil spirits; but by the seventeenth century the association between the mother of the Emperor Constantine who was believed to have rescued the true cross from Jerusalem and the tree had been forgotten.

Similarly, "witch stones", made from the rowan and marked with St Andrew's cross saltire, X, were commonly found in the thresholds or fireplaces of cruck-framed houses occupied by illiterate Protestants.

Belief in the malign power of witches was centuries old. The Old Testament contained several condemnations of sorcerers and witches.

Catholic Papal bulls were issued as early as 1258 declaring witchcraft, which rejected God in favour of Satan, to be a heresy; and the Protestant reformers, Martin Luther and John Calvin, argued that witches must be killed. However, the Protestant Reformation and the Catholic Counter-Reformation gave new impetus to witch-hunting. In England, a series of acts of Parliament, quoting Exodus, "Thou shall not suffer a witch to live", were passed in 1542, 1563 and 1604.

These first made witchcraft a statutory offence, punishable in extreme cases by death by hanging. Only if a victim had been killed by poisoning was death by burning permitted. Ninety per cent of all alleged witches in England were women and in all about a quarter of them were executed.

The Scots under King James VI had no compunction about burning witches. In 1597 he became the only reigning monarch in history to write a pamphlet "Daemonologie" (The Science of Demons) which declared his belief in witches, "the instruments of Satan". He was convinced that they caused storms, sickness, madness, deformity and death. In every Scottish church there was a box in which anyone could post an accusation of witchcraft.

As a result, when James became king of England, the new statute of 1604 made hanging a mandatory punishment for the first offence of witchcraft. No proof of malicious intent was necessary: a Devil's mark was sufficient. From now on the state rather than the church dealt with witchcraft. In the same year, Marlowe's Faust intensified hatred and fear of witches; but it was Shakespeare's Macbeth, first performed before the royal court in 1606, which implied that witches could cause sea storms and contribute to the murder of a lawful monarch.

The Gunpowder Plot of 1605 had strengthened the conviction of many Protestants like King James that there was a close link between Catholic practices and witchcraft. Witches were traitors as well as heretics. In 1612, the Pendle witch trials at York and Lancaster led to the deaths of ten. A nine-year old denounced her sister, elder brother, mother, grandmother and several neighbours. They were all hanged the next day.

However, by 1619, King James seems to have lost interest in witches: his published "Meditation on the Lord's Prayer" never mentioned them. During the next two decades, the 1620s and 1630s, witch hunting appeared to have died out. But the Civil Wars of the 1640s and 1650s stimulated the final wave in England of the barbarous persecution of alleged witches. Charles I had always assumed, unlike his father, that witch hunts were associated with Puritan fanaticism and the events in East Anglia between 1645 and 1647 support his view. During those two years, 184 women were tried and at least a hundred executed, most of them totally innocent.

The last conviction for witchcraft, later overturned, was in 1712. When the magistrate was told that the accused had flown through the air, he remarked, “There is no law in England against flying.” Finally, in 1736, Parliament repealed the English and Scottish witchcraft statutes. [to be continued]

Have you got something to share on the story? Were you there? What do you think? - Send your pictures, videos or story and we'll publish the best

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GENERAL SESSIONS COURT OF ANDERSON COUNTY, TENNESSEE
DIVISION I

STATE OF TENNESSEE vs. Eldam S Curtiss

State Control No. _____ Anderson County Case No. 16ST1259

AFFIDAVIT OF COMPLAINT

I, the affiant named below, after being sworn, state under oath that on or about, May 14, 2016 in Anderson County, Tennessee, committed the offense(s) of Violation(s) of:

T.C.A.	Class	Felony/Misd.	Offense
55-10-401	A	Misd	Driving Under Influence

I further state under oath that the essential facts constituting the offense(s), the sources of my information and the reasons why this information is believable and reliable are as follows:

On 5-14-2016 a blue Toyota Tundra displaying TN Tag D7940V entered a operational sobriety checkpoint on State Route 62 1/2 mile East of Union Valley Road. A/D/A Investigator Bobby Jo Higgs made contact with the driver and observed an odor that appeared to be that of an alcoholic beverage emitting from inside the vehicle. Investigator Higgs called this to my attention. I observed the driver who was identified as Curtis Scott Eidam d/o/b/08-23-1980, TN DL 094294401 to be the operator. I further observed the smell of what appeared to be that of an alcoholic beverage emitting from defendants mouth and person. The defendant had blood shot watery eyes and stated he had drunk (4) to (5) shots within the past 4 hours. The defendant stated he had a handgun in the center console of the vehicle he was driving. The defendant was removed from the vehicle as a safety precaution as well as a female passenger Rebecka Alexander d/o/b 07/26/1971, who was highly intoxicated. Defendant was observed to be unsteady on his feet and leaned against vehicle. Defendant was given a series of SFST to perform. The results indicated that his ability to operate a motor vehicle where impaired beyond legal limits and his normal clearness of mind was altered. The defendant was advised of the TN Implied Consent Law via written warning and did submit to a breathalyzer test that was readily available at the Anderson County Jail. The results of the test were .117. As a result of inventory of the vehicle a Springfield Armory XD-9 S/N MG808660 was located in the center console. Once in custody the defendant advised me that he would need a key from the vehicle he was operating. Defendant went on to explain the key fit a Chasity belt that was attached to his penis. Defendant stated one key was on his key chain and the other was on a necklace around Alexander's neck. Lieutenant Heatherly retrieved the key which was given to jail personnel upon arrival.

Affiant's Signature: _____

Name (Printed): Sgt. Dennis Smith
Address (Printed): 7601 Kingston Pike Knoxville, TN 37919
Phone Number: 865-594-5800 ext 1192

Sworn to and subscribed before me on May 16th, 2016

_____
Judge/Clerk/Judicial Commissioner

ARREST WARRANT
TO ANY LAWFUL OFFICER OF THE STATE:

☐ Base on the affidavit of complaint filed in this case, there is probable cause to believe that the offense(s) or violation(s) listed above were committed by the defendant.

☐ **YOU ARE THEREFORE COMMANDED** in the name of the State of Tennessee to immediately ARREST the named defendant and bring him or her to this court to answer the charges.

Date_____

☐ **Bail is set at $**_____

_____
Judge/Judicial Commissioner

☐ Release defendant on a citation

http://www.catalannewsagency.com/society-science/item/tools-that-may-be-a-million-years-old-discovered-near-tarragona

Catalannewsagency

Monday, 13 June 2016

Tools that may be a million years old discovered near Tarragona

Barcelona (CNA).- A set of 50 flint tools has been discovered in Barranc de la Boella, near Tarragona, a city 80 kilometres south of Barcelona. The tools are estimated to be between 800,000 and a million years old, according to a report issued by the Catalan Institute of Human Paleo-Ecology and Social Evolution (IPHES), the organisation at the head of the excavation. Co-director of the excavation and researcher at IPHES, Josep Vallverdú, stated that the site "contains the oldest files on human evolution in Catalonia and on the Iberian Peninsula", of which the potential is still unknown. These tools were found in an area known as La Mina, and are supposedly very well preserved, along with animal skeletal remains and coprolites, most notably related to deer, horses, cattle, rhinoceros, and even hyenas. This area is set to be excavated over a larger surface area, and will require more personnel, which is why "spots have been opened to graduates and postgraduates, in order to include the site in the academic and European university field", according to Vallverdú.

The excavation that has taken place in recent weeks in 'Barranc de la Boella' in the village of Canonja has uncovered a set of over 50 flint tools of exceptional value for its age. The age of the tools is estimated to be between 800,000 and one million years old, according to the reported issued by the Catalan Institute of Human Paleo-Ecology and Social Evolution (IPHES), the organisation at the head of the excavation. The artefacts were found in the area known as La Mina and are well-preserved. Also recovered were a large number of hyena coprolites, and among the skeletal remains of large animals also found were several large fragments of deer antlers and the femur of a rhinoceros, of the same age as the tools.

Co-director of the excavation and researcher at IPHES, Josep Vallverdú, stated that the site at La Mina "contains the oldest files on human evolution in Catalonia and on the Iberian Peninsula, and the most unique of all is that which we do not know of yet because as of today, its potential is still not well known".

Archaeologists also state that the conservation of animal remains is exceptional. For now, up to four layers of paleontological and archaeological material have been identified. As for the remains unearthed in this campaign, the presence of a wide range of taxa (deer, horses, cattle and rhinoceros) stands out, according to IPHES, providing an interpretation based on the paleo-ecological river ecosystems and the Francolí delta basin. "These types of knowledge are unknown in our region, and are a unique content through which to explain human evolution and ecosystems in the recent history of the Earth", added Vallverdú.

This year, after ten campaigns of work under the direction of IPHES, a marquee has been installed in La Mina which will be permanent, and will contribute to the protection of the site. This infrastructure has been promoted by IPHES with the help of the City of La Canonja, the Province of Tarragona and the Government of Catalonia.

A greatly extended intervention

"In those early years, we focused a lot on different surveys, made to hone in on the age and the number and characteristics of the fossil strata; in the survey of La Mina, we don't yet know to what depth in geologic time there are archaeological and paleontological remains", explained Josep Vallverdú.

"One of the next challenges is to finish this survey, while we begin to excavate a large surface extension" added the archaeologist. "In this way we can begin to make deeper studies on our knowledge of the ecosystems of the Francolí basin, thanks to a higher number of fossils", he noted.

For this reason, the next campaign will require an increase in the number of participants on the worksites, in order to prepare for intervention on a large scale. This will also remove a significant amount of sediment. However, as has happened in the bay, it is likely that the more recent strata contain archaeological and

paleontological remains, and therefore the IPHES will have to document them in the best way possible.

Due to this, the campaign has opened participation lists to graduates and postgraduates, in order "to include the site of Barranco de la Boella in the academic and European university field, and become a school site in the coming years" Vallverdú asserts.

A research project with universal vocation

The ten or so archaeological excavations of the Barranc de la Boella site have helped significantly to acquire basic knowledge about their heritage, scientific and academic value. The research group formed in part by the staff of IPHES and that of the Museum of Natural Sciences-CSIC Madrid highlights the uniqueness of the site in explaining the origin of human settlement in Eurasia.

This is considered a unique file on the paleo-ecological composition of the Francolí Basin, going back more than a million years. "For this reason we have expressed on the local, regional and national level the opportunity to build a research project with universal vocation in order to know the natural history of humanity that lived in Canonja during this time that was so remote", concludes Vallverdú.

- CUP's veto on budget will have "extremely severe consequences"

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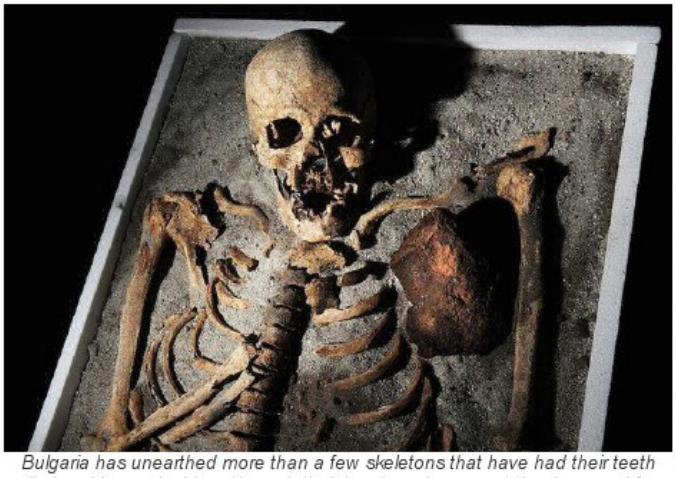


Tourism officials in Bulgaria are banking big on vampire corpses

mnn.com

Come for the beaches and folk dancing, stay for the impaled skeletons.

Matt Hickman
July 22, 2016, 3 p.m.



Bulgaria has unearthed more than a few skeletons that have had their teeth pulled and iron rods driven through their hearts as to prevent the deceased from rising from their graves. But can the country compete with Romania when it comes to vampire-themed tourism? (Photo: Nikolay Doychinov/AFP/Getty Images)

Romania, home to the mist-shrouded "land beyond the forest" otherwise known as Transylvania, rules the Eastern European vampire tourism circuit for obvious reasons.

Now it would appear that Romania's southerly neighbor, Bulgaria, wants in on a piece of the undead pie as that country's tourism officials position a grisly archaeological find — the skeletal remains of 17 adolescents who, during the 4th century, were nailed to their coffins with iron stakes to prevent them from, you know, rising up and wandering around post-burial — as one its top summertime attractions. Forget the Bulgarian Riviera — the world's largest "vampire funeral" is where it's at.

Ironically, Romanians (followed by Turks, Greeks and Germans) make up a hefty bulk of Bulgaria's annual visitors. It's safe to assume that a good number of Romanians are likely trying to escape the vampire-driven tourism that, to the chagrin of many, has become unavoidable in their own country thanks to 19th century Irish novelist Bram Stoker and the impalement-happy nobleman Vlad III, Prince of Wallachia, who supposedly inspired his most famous work. (A descendant of the House of Drăculești, Vlad III, aka Vlad Dracula, is regarded by Romanians as more of a folk hero than a lascivious bloodsucker with Kabuki-style coiffure).

I mean, really, if you live in a place dominated by vampire-related tourism, you're going to want to vacation in a place that has nothing at all to do with vampires, right?

The residents of Forks, on Washington's Olympic Peninsula, can likely relate.

Yet despite potential eye-rolling from Romanian tourists, CityLab reports that Bulgaria is moving full-steam ahead with its own vampire-themed tourism scheme. The efforts would center around Deultum, an ancient Roman settlement-turned-archaeological site in the southeastern part of the country where the aforementioned medieval vampire funeral was first unearthed in 2004.

Similar discoveries (read: millennia-old corpses secured to their coffins with stakes or by other means in accordance to pagan burial rites) have been found across Bulgaria in recent years. This includes a 2012 vampire-unearthing excavation near the quaint seaside resort town of Sozopol, which has since become a hotbed of vampire tourism even though the remains of its resident vampire were eventually relocated to the Bulgarian Natural History Museum in the capital of Sofia. Balkan Insight notes that in 2013 the town's mayor announced plans to create a joint "vampire trail" between Sozopol and Sigishoara, the tourist-swamped Transylvanian city believed to be the birthplace of Vlad the Impaler himself.

Whatever the case, Bulgarian Tourism Ministry hopes that further developing and promoting the 17-skeleton-strong site at Deultum will appeal to both Balkan history buffs and aficionados of reanimated corpses that prey on the living.

The ancient Bulgarian coastal resort town of Sozopol is famed for its beaches, film festival and resident vampire, which was unearthed during archaeological excavations in 2012. (Photo: Martin Yanakiev/flickr)



Sozopol, Bulgaria

Not surprisingly, officials have opted to cater more to the latter camp, which makes sense considering how the smaller discoveries at archeological digs near Sozopol and other small Bulgarian towns have attracted curiosity-seekers by the busloads. Earlier this summer in an announcement that made clear her intentions to boost tourism figures at Deultium and within the modern day municipality of Sredets, Minister of Tourism Nikolina Angelkova noted that "paying attention to the vampires" would be an integral part of the scheme.

"We all know about the international interest in such findings. With joint efforts, we can popularize what we have here," explained Angelkova, who plans on working with Ivan Zhabov, mayor of Sredets, to construct "a big glass sarcophagus" in which to the stake-affixed human remains.

Not everyone, however, is on board with Angelkova's plan to transform Sredets and its archaeological site into an international vampire destination a la Bran Castle in Romania, which, despite being the epicenter of eerie Transylvania tourism, is only very loosely linked to Vlad III.

"I have always said I have certain reservations against such vampire topics," the director of Sredets' history museum, Krasimira Kostova, recently explained to told Bulgarian National Radio. "The main accent in Bulgaria should be on its immense cultural heritage as meeting point of different cultures — Thracians, Ancient Greeks, Romans."

In an interesting bit of timing, The New York Times just recently published a gushing travel article on Burgas, the Black Sea-abutting coastal province where both Sredets and Sozopol are located. While the author fondly recalls buckets of "meaty mussels," topless beaches and affordable leather handbags, nowhere is there a mention of skeletons with their teeth plucked out and iron rods driven through their hearts.

Maybe next time.

Matt Hickman (@mattyhick) writes about design, architecture and the intersection between the natural world and the built environment.

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Tourists put out fire in historic Swiss church with holy water

17/06

thelocal.ch

The Local



Tourists put out fire in historic Swiss church with holy water

The fire broke out in a baroque confessional. Photo: St Gallen Police

Tourists put out fire in historic Swiss church with holy water

The Local · 22 Jun 2016, 13:21

Published: 22 Jun 2016 10:21 GMT+02:00 Updated: 22 Jun 2016 13:21 GMT+02:00

A couple of quick-thinking tourists earned the praise of police on Tuesday when they used holy water to put out a fire in the historic cathedral of St Gallen.

The fire broke out in a baroque confessional in the cathedral in the early afternoon but was stopped by two "brave" visitors who rushed to pour holy water onto the blaze, local police said in a statement.

Police believe the fire started when a candle placed inside the confessional set alight a curtain. The blaze then spread to the wooden seat of the confessional.

The fire, thought to have been deliberately lit, caused damages worth ten of thousands of Swiss francs to the historic object, police said.

They are now seeking witnesses.

The Cathedral and Abbey of St Gall is a Unesco World Heritage Site and its famous library is a treasure trove of medieval knowledge.

The Local Europe AB Östgötagatan 12 116 25 Stockholm Sweden



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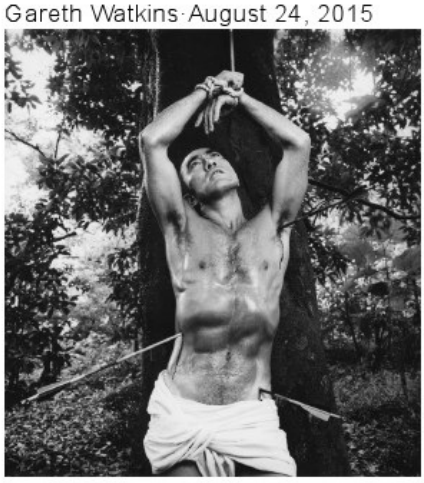
The Tragic Life and Death of Yukio Mishima -

cvltnation.com

CVLT NATION

CVLT Nation

Gareth Watkins 2015-08-24
Gareth Watkins·August 24, 2015



He was three times nominated for the Nobel Prize for Literature, an accomplished bodybuilder, a trained soldier, an expert swordsman, a model, an actor, a singer. Any one of these achievements is impressive, two or three exceptional, all of them taken together is evidence of near superhuman willpower, an Übermensch towering above us ordinary mortals.

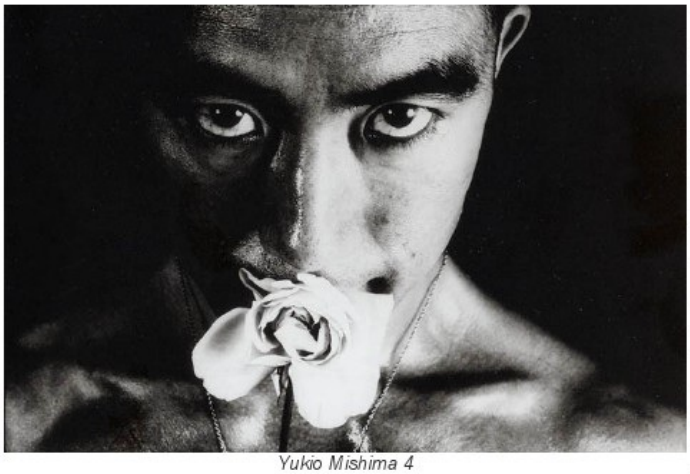
But then Yukio Mishima had a darker side: tormented in his youth by a disturbed grandmother with aristocratic pretensions, shamed by his overbearing father into hiding his early work, possibly closeted or bisexual, partly the model of Japan's westernised post-war generation – and on a deeper level, a throwback to its imperial past. The guy was complicated.

Born in Tokyo in 1925, Kimitake Hiraoka (Yukio Mishima is a pen-name) was the child of upper middle-class parents, who a hundred years ago would have served feudal lords, but who now found themselves serving a unified, modern nation as government bureaucrats. Almost as soon as he was born, he was snatched away by his grandmother, Natsu, the granddaughter of a Daimyo (a powerful feudal lord) and wife of a wealthy government offical. Natsu was prone to outbursts of violence and melancholy, and enforced a strict regime on the infant Yukio's life, only allowing his mother to see him at appointed times for timed breastfeeding sessions. The company of other boys, sports and even sunlight was off limits, so Yukio would spend his days playing with his female cousins' dolls.

When he was older and his grandmother's grip on his life loosened, it was replaced with his father's overwhelming concern that Yukio wasn't 'masculine' enough, and the prime evidence of this was his son's writing (apparently Hiraoka senior had never heard of Hemingway, Mailer or any of the other literary tough-guys who combined a love for the written word with scotch and fistfights). Despite his father's interference, Yukio was getting good, and soon his short stories were appearing in prestigious literary magazines. One early story, 1946's 'The Cigarette,' describes the shame he felt and the bullying he endured when he 'came out' to his friends in his school's Rugby club about his membership in the school's literary society.

His first novel, 1949's *Confessions of a Mask*, was an explosive hit upon its release. The novel was loosely autobiographical: it's narrator, like Yukio, was a sickly child, small and physically frail, but a deep admirer of masculine strength and beauty. The narrator is also secretly gay, and in right-wing pre-war Japan, that's practically a death sentence. Speculation about Yukio's sexuality followed him throughout his life, and has never been satisfactorily answered: he was married and had children, but also frequented gay bars (perhaps for research into his often homosexual characters) and was often photographed in homoerotic poses, bare-chested and oiled, stripped down to a loincloth or as Saint Sebastian, an early Christian matyr shot through with arrows who has become something of a gay icon over the years (and maybe always was.) It's definitely the case that he had a long-term affair with another award-winning writer, Jiro Fukushima, who first visited Yukio to ask where to find the gay bar described in his novel *Forbidden Colors*.

Over the next twenty years, Yukio would write 34 novels, 50 plays, 25 books of short stories, and at least 35 books of essays, all the while also posing for photographs, starring in films and living the life of his country's foremost literary figure. His politics had always skewed to the right, but it was a conservatism rooted in his country's past instead of a push towards a western-style future or the emulation of European fascism and nationalism that had driven his country to war. Bushido, the Samurai code of honor, figured prominently for him.



Yukio Mishima 4

For Yukio, embracing Bushido meant rejecting the industrialized militarism that had began in the Meiji period (1867) – to his critics he was a right wing loon, no better than those driving around Tokyo in speaker-equipped vans delivering sermons on lost honor and traditional values. The figure of the emperor also loomed large over his nationalistic thought, though he denounced Emperor Hirohito for, of all things, declaring that he wasn't a demi-god after Japan's defeat in World War II. In Japanese tradition, the emperors are descended from Amaterasu, goddess of the sun. Few, if any, Japanese citizens, including the emperor himself, really believed this, but for Yukio the statement was a betrayal of the men who had fought for a 'living god.' He declared that Hirohito should have abdicated when the war was lost, which enraged more mainstream right-wingers.

After years of seeing his right wing beliefs almost eclipse his literary achievements, Yukio decided to take action. He enlisted in the Ground Self Defense Force and underwent basic military training; then, a year later in 1968, formed a group that called itself the Tatenokai – the shield society. He recruited close to a hundred young men, mostly college students, and began training them in karate and military tactics (they were allowed to train alongside the Ground Self Defense Force). Ostensibly, they were a volunteer militia who would protect the emperor in the case of a left-wing revolt, but two years after they were formed, their true purpose became known.

On November 25, 1970, Yukio and three members of the Tatenokai bluffed their way into the Tokyo headquarters of Japan's self-defense forces. Once there, they took a high-ranking official hostage and barricaded themselves in an office. Wearing a homemade uniform, Yukio Mishima stepped out onto a balcony overlooking a field where soldiers were training and began to give a speech. This was his big moment – all his fame and achievement was nothing compared to what he was about to do on that balcony. He was going to change Japan, the world even, and restore the honour it had been losing since the 'black ships' of the first European traders arrived.

He was laughed off the balcony shortly after his speech had begun. Ashamed, he retreated back into the office and knelt on the floor, drawing his tanto – a short dagger.



yukio mishima 2

Seppuku, often called 'hari-kari' in the west, is an excruciating way to die, even when done correctly. Though far too many western-made films depict it as a disgraced samurai simply impaling himself on his sword (and dying instantly), the correct way is to plunge the twenty-five centimeter long blade into one's abdomen and begin cutting from right to left, with the aim of spilling one's intestines. At a specified point another samurai, called the kaishakunin, will cut your head off – if they do it right, a sliver of flesh on the neck will remain so that the head can hang in front of the body.

The Tatenokai members accompanying Yukio didn't exactly get his, or their own, seppuku right. Yukio did his part, cutting his stomach open, but his kaishakunin, Masakatsu Morita, failed to decapitate his leader after several attempts and passed his sword to another Tatenokai member, Hiroyasu Koga, who finished the job. Yukio would have been alive until the final blow. Morita stabbed himself in the stomach, and again, Koga, a skilled Kendo practitioner, stepped in to do his duty. It is rumoured that he now lives as a Shinto priest on the island of Shikoku.

It's unclear whether his coup attempt was merely a pretext for a nobler suicide than he could have achieved at home with pills and vodka. It's clear that the world lost a monumental talent: in the moments before his death, he composed a jisei, a death poem:

"A small night storm blows
Saying 'falling is the essence of a flower'
Preceding those who hesitate"

Gareth Watkins

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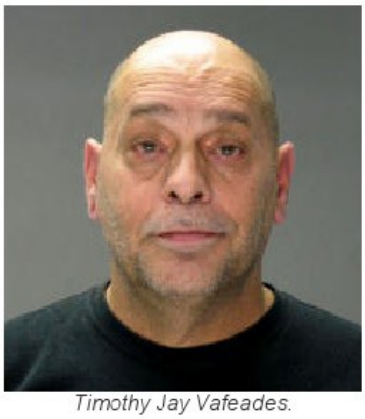
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Teenage vampire sex slave case: Trucker makes plea deal

By Lindsay Whitehurst, Associated Press Posted: 06/30/2016 01:22:26 PM PDT | Updated: 3 days ago
Posted: 06/30/2016 01:22:26 PM PDT | Updated: 3 days ago

mercurynews.com

The Mercury News
San Jose Mercury News


Timothy Jay Vafeades.

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) -- A cross-country trucker accused of keeping women as sex slaves in his semi-trailer struck a plea deal with federal prosecutors Thursday, days before his trial was set to begin.

Timothy Jay Vafeades was charged with luring two women ages 18 and 19 to his truck and holding them prisoner for months. He was accused of forcibly altering their appearances, including filing their teeth to vampire-like points.

Prosecutors say he had four other victims in the decades before his 2014 arrest, and their stories would have been evidence in the trial even though the cases are too old for criminal charges.

Vafeades now faces up to 20 years in prison under the terms of the deal. He pleaded guilty to two counts of transporting for illegal sexual activity. As part of the deal, two kidnapping charges will be dropped. Sentencing is set for November.

The Utah man appeared in court in a gray-striped jail jumpsuit and glasses, his hands shackled in front of him. He politely answered the judge's questions and read aloud a legal description of the charges, but said little else.

Prosecutors hope the guilty pleas are a step toward closure for the victims, Assistant U.S. Attorney Trina Higgins said. Defense attorneys declined to comment.

The 19-year-old victim knew Vafeades, 56, and voluntarily came to work with him on his truck known as the "Twilight Express," in 2013, but when she decided to leave he attacked her, prosecutors said.

He trapped her and sexually assaulted her repeatedly for six months. He wore a fake set of fangs and forced her to wear one, too, authorities said.

Vafeades was arrested after officers at a Minnesota weigh station noticed bruises on the woman's face and discovered an old restraining order barring Vafeades from contacting her, according to charging documents.

After his arrest, a second woman went to authorities to report she had been held captive in Vafeades' truck, according to the warrant.

The 18-year-old woman said Vafeades kept her with him for about three months through threats and violence, forcing her to have sex with him nearly every day, calling her his slave, authorities said.

Vafeades' lawyers have said the Minnesota arrest shouldn't have happened because the protective order was no longer valid. Attorney Vanessa Ramos has asked a judge to bar the evidence seized

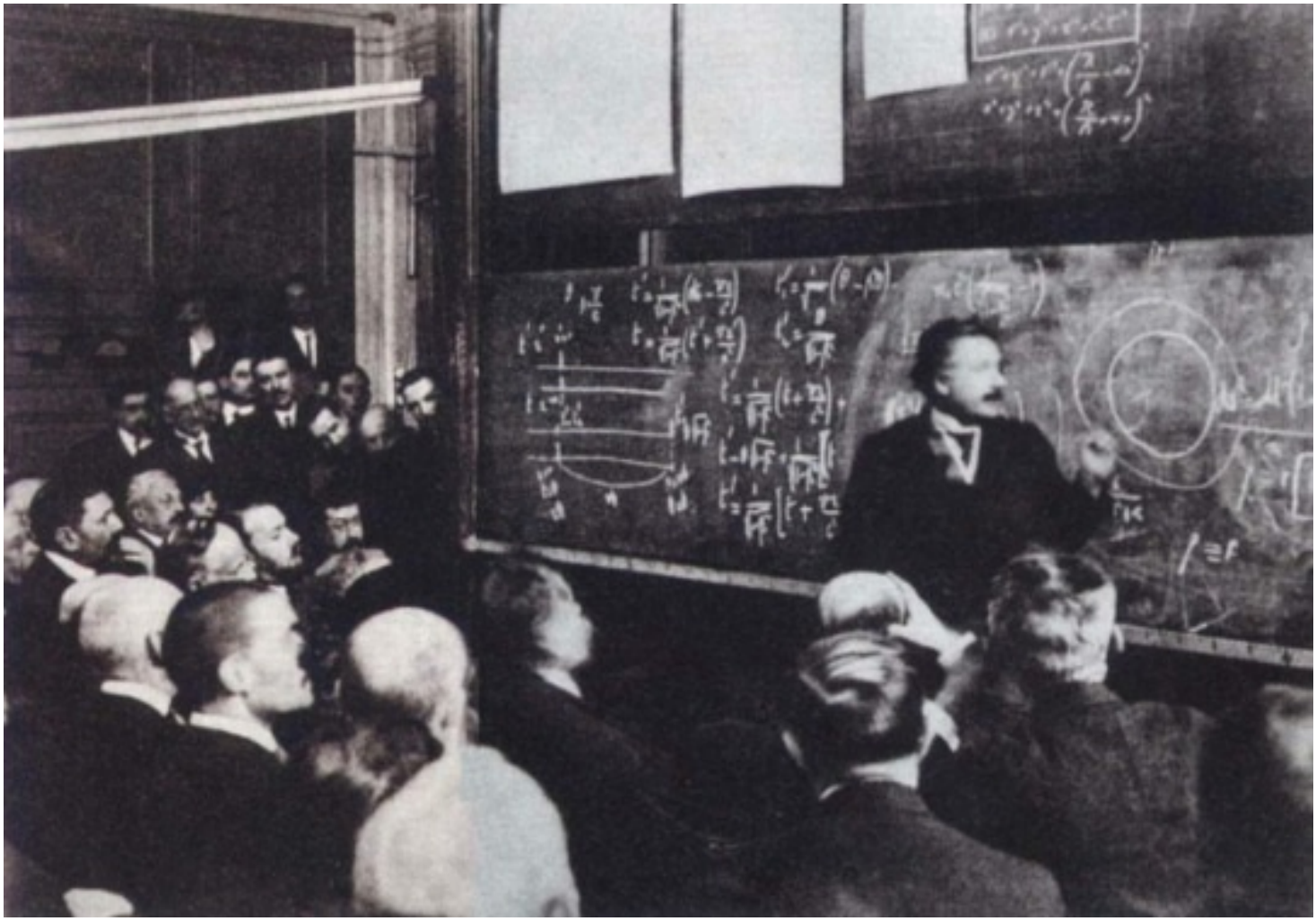
from his truck, but the judge decided the stop was valid.

Vafeades had four additional victims in the two decades before his arrest, prosecutors allege. He met one woman in 2008 and married her, but started assaulting her after she agreed to go to Utah with him and continued until she escaped about six months later, according to court documents.

He met another woman at a retail store and invited her to join him in his truck for a week in 2005, but then held her on board for about three months before she got away, court documents state. Vafeades also assaulted women he met at a college and online, authorities said. No charges were filed in those cases because the statute of limitations was up, but prosecutors said their stories showed preparation, planning and intent.

Vafeades pleaded guilty in May transporting child pornography and a second child pornography count was dropped.

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The friend who keeps your cat while you are on a vacation, is often an enemy when you return.

BABY—I CONGRATULATE YOU ON YOUR WISE heartlessness I shall never forgive you TOM

JOE.—"I HATE YOU." LONELY. OH! SO LONELY.
Anxiously waiting for letter asking me to come.

JUSTICE—YOU, LIKE ALL ANONYMOUS LETTER writers, are a coward, sneak and liar. Go bury yourself. You are a stench to the nostrils of all decent men.

J. A. BRITTON.

WILL burn letters unread; let H. do as he likes; indifferent. "THE LITTLE WOMAN."

ROSEBUD. ROSEBUD. ROSEBUD.—SHALL BE IN the city Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday next. Send me a note when you can meet me Mum's the word.
GILSEY HOUSE.

NO. 48—I WILL GIVE YOU UNTIL SATURDAY TO redeem your two promises, otherwise we are unworthy of being friends and shall never meet again. Send answer.

MERCANTILE LIBRARY—LAST TUESDAY.—I HAVE just returned home, and warn the contemptible puppy that I am aware of all his *co*'lone, and a bullet awaits him if the lady is again insulted. He will regret it more than a slapped face.

THIS IS A CLUMSY MANNER IN WHICH TO offer homage, but as you know, no other is now permitted me. I am sure you knew me when you saw me in that street car to-day (Thursday).

A BIG KISS GOOD NIGHT, BIG KISS GOOD morning; be brave and true and we'll win, darling; letter received; don't believe stories; am true; we'll be together soon; if necessary see doctor.

Fear the turtle: Terrapins disrupt planes at New York's JFK

phys.org

July 16, 2016 by Verena Dobnik



This undated photo provided on Friday, July 15, 2016, from the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey shows a diamondback terrapin turtle on a JFK airport runway in New York. The Port Authority, which runs JFK, says nearly 400 ...more

Fear the turtle: Terrapins disrupt planes at New York's JFK

Of all the factors that could delay flights at New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport, this one is probably the slowest: turtles.

Nearly 400 diamondback terrapins have turned up on the airport's property this year, most near the sandy turf bordering runways where they lay eggs and build nests. Some of the slowpoke visitors have managed to crawl onto the runways and taxiways, causing delays while workers round them up, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey that operates the airport said Friday.

"Anything can be a hazard to aircraft, even turtles" said Laura Francoeur, the port authority's chief wildlife biologist.

While officials said they didn't have information on whether a plane has ever hit a turtle, they did say that it's not uncommon to have delays of several minutes at a time while workers pluck turtles from the potential path of planes. The turtles are then measured, tagged and returned to a safe habitat.

That normal habitat is the nearby Jamaica Bay salt marshes. But each year during a monthlong mating season that peaks in mid-July, they find special spots for their eggs to hatch, mostly in the sand along the perimeter of the airport.



Fear the turtle: Terrapins disrupt planes at New York's JFK

This undated photo provided on Friday, July 15, 2016, from the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey shows a diamondback terrapin turtle on a JFK airport runway in New York. The Port Authority, which runs JFK, says nearly 400 ...more

Two years ago, the Port Authority installed plastic barriers along the sandy edge to keep the turtles from taking runway walks. But that doesn't deter the more adventurous ones.

Last year, 163 turtles found their way on to airport property, officials said, fewer because of runway construction.

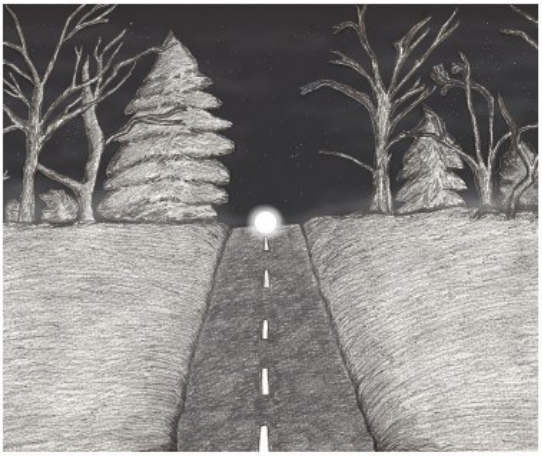
Explore further: Indonesia seizes nearly 700 endangered turtles

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UCO News: Screening to Show How UCO Professor Solved Decades-Old Northeastern Oklahoma 'Spooklight' Mystery

uco.edu



March 23, 2015

Media Contact: Lindsay Thomas, Communications and Marketing Coordinator, UCO University Relations, 405-974-2121, lhouts@uco.edu

SCREENING TO SHOW HOW UCO PROFESSOR SOLVED DECADES-OLD NORTHEASTERN OKLAHOMA 'SPOOKLIGHT' MYSTERY

University of Central Oklahoma professor of English Allen Rice, Ph.D., has a weakness for mysteries — specifically, trying to solve them. Along with a group of friends nicknamed "The Boomers," Rice has traveled Oklahoma and the world on expeditions to investigate mysteries of folklore and history.

In October Rice and his Boomers took on the "Spooklight" — a visual phenomenon most often described as a floating orb of light that can frequently be seen on the border between southwestern Missouri and northeastern Oklahoma east of the town of Quapaw. To the group's great surprise, they developed a working theory in the matter of a weekend and returned in December to test the theory and create a short documentary proving what they uncovered about the phenomenon.

The film will debut at 7 p.m. April 3 in Pegasus Theater in the Liberal Arts building on Central's campus. The screening is free and open to the public and will be followed by a question-and-answer session with Rice and his team.

Sightings of the Spooklight, a thing of folklore and oral tradition, date back to the late 1800s. It is believed to have been first documented in print in The Kansas City Star in the 1930s, and was investigated to no conclusion by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 1946. National and local magazines, newspapers, and television crews have tried to solve the mystery and failed.

Rice was studying strange phenomena in Oklahoma when he found the story of the Spooklight. Having never heard of it previously, he figured looking into it might be a good weekend of fun.

Rice knows that the premise sounds a bit strange.

"Some guys hunt, some guys fish. We look for mysteries. Do we believe in the stuff we are looking for? Not really," Rice said.

"But even the greatest skeptic on a boat at Loch Ness will peer into the slate gray waters trying to see something. We just do it to hang out and have fun — which we do."

Rice's partners in crime — The Boomers — are Christopher Shaneyfelt, a veteran's education specialist and English instructor at Rose State college, as well as the film's editor; Michael Ferguson, a world history and government teacher at Harding Fine Arts Academy in Oklahoma City; James Cast, from Medicine Park, Oklahoma; Keon Canady, an undergraduate at Central; Charles Nunley, a professor of mathematics at Oklahoma City Community College; Karl Dowell, a librarian at

Mustang High School; and Deedee Rice, a world history teacher at Edmond Santa Fe High School and Allen's wife.

The Boomers have explored Oklahoma's Wichita Mountains using an old treasure map looking for Jessie James' lost gold and have searched for Bigfoot in the Ouachita Mountains. They surveyed the waters of Scotland looking for the Loch Ness Monster. They searched for the buried body of a crashed space alien in Texas.

Rice, the leader of the pack who researches and selects mysteries to investigate, admits that while the expeditions have been plenty of fun, they have never solved a mystery, or even gotten close — until now.

"We were as shocked as anybody that we solved this one," Rice said.

"We're just excited to share what we've discovered and shed a little light on the real story of Oklahoma's 'Spooklight.'"

For more information about "Spooklight," contact Rice at alrice@uco.edu.

(end)

Editor's Note: To download art associated with this release, visit www.uco.edu/photo/Spooklight03.15.

Cutline: The Spooklight, a previously unexplained visual phenomenon visible from the Oklahoma-Missouri border, is the focus of "Spooklight," a short documentary featuring UCO professor of English Allen Rice, Ph.D. Rice and a group of mystery-solving friends investigated — and discovered the cause of — the decades-old Spooklight in 2014. The film explaining the light's source will debut at 7 p.m. April 3 in Pegasus Theater in the Liberal Arts building on Central's campus. It is free and open to the public and will be followed by a question-and-answer session. (Illustration/documentary still: Christopher Shaneyfelt, 2015.)

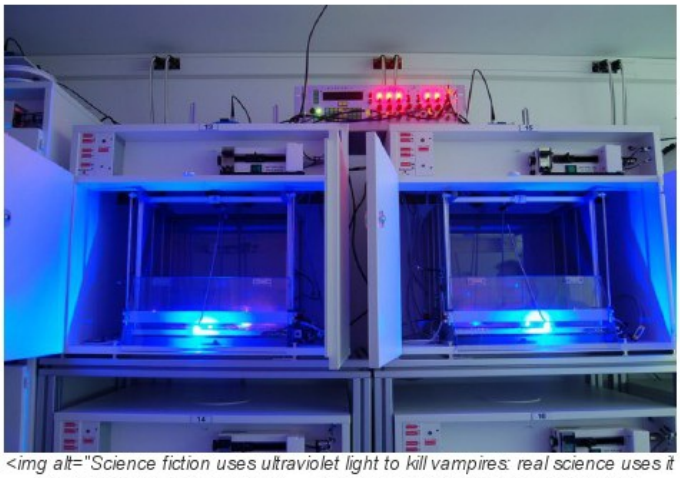
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Science fiction uses ultraviolet light to kill vampires: real science uses it fight and kill something worse — cancer

July 2, 2016 yahoo.com

https://www.yahoo.com/tech/uv-light-kills-vampires-sci-215315740.html



**

Sci-Fi taught us ultraviolet light was a weapon to use against the scary undead stalking the night. Actual science has discovered that it may be an extremely effective treatment for cancer.

Science fiction has repeatedly displayed ultraviolet light as a weapon against blood-sucking creatures of the night, but now hard science is giving the method a shot against a real everyday danger: cancer. Early test results indicate that it has the potential to be highly effective.

Chemotherapy can be a devastating course of treatment for cancer patients. It enervates patients in hope of buying more time at the very least, and remission at best. It is one of the few treatment options for hard-to-reach or inoperable tumors, and is one of the most trying treatments that one can face.

A new experimental treatment has shown promising results in lab tests, eliminating 95 percent of targeted cancer cells in mice in only two hours, according to Engadget. The treatment is based on an experimental concept called optogentics, which uses light in the fight against cancer cells. This method may give patients who were considered too high-risk for other treatments another option.

The process is simple in description, as well as less invasive than other methods. Researchers first inject the chemical nitrobenzaldehyde into the tumor, and give it time to spread throughout the cells. They then focus a beam of ultraviolet light on the tumor.

The combined effect causes cells to become extremely acidic, which in turn causes the cells to die. Researcher Matthew Gdovin, an associate professor at the University of Texas San Antonio told Medical Xpress, "Even though there are many different types of cancers, the one thing they have in common is their susceptibility to this induced cell suicide."

One benefit to this type of approach is it allows treatment to a specific region of the body, unlike chemotherapy that affects the entire body. It is also a much less intrusive method, as it only requires an injection of the nitrobenzaldehyde and a flash of ultraviolet light.

While not yet widely available, researchers hope that it will soon be a viable treatment option for those who have tumors in areas that are difficult for surgeons to treat, such as the brain stem, aorta, or spine. It would also be an option for those who have had the maximum possible radiation treatment or children at risk of mutation from radiation treatment.

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Unidentified Dong Dangler Drapes Hundreds of Dildos Around Portland

Hudson Hongo

gawker.com

http://gawker.com/unidentified-dong-dangler-hangs-up-hundreds-of-dildos-a-1717885294



A specter is haunting Portland—the specter of dildos.

According to Reuters, hundreds of "phallic sex toys" have recently started appearing on Rip City power lines, prompting numerous complaints to the city and several delightful Twitter posts.

But fear not, penily-menaced Portlanders, because officials say the synthetic dicks pose no immediate threat. From Reuters:

> A spokesman for public utility Portland General Electric said he did not believe the rubber products posed a fire hazard.

Still, area power companies would prefer you *didn't* use their lines as ad hoc nun-chub hangers.

"The temptation may be there for tittering," a Pacific Power spokesperson told *The Oregonian*, "but we want to keep the lines as safe as possible."

The following replies are approved. To see additional replies that are pending approval, click Show Pending. Warning: These may contain graphic material.

- selmabouvierterwilligerhutzmcclureHudson Hongo
7/14/15 10:06pm

  How I know I'm old: my first thought was "Hundreds?! Damn, who has that kind of cash to drop on street art dildos?!"

  - Armageddon T. Thunderbirdselmabouvierterwilligerhutzmcclure
7/14/15 10:17pm

    Maybe they were thrift-store dildos. My local St. Vincent DePaul doesn't have a marital aid aisle, but not every branch has the same layout.

  - HoldenCashselmabouvierterwilligerhutzmcclure
7/14/15 10:35pm

    > Damn, who has that kind of cash to drop on street art dildos?!

    I live in the area and I **heard** that the man/woman who does this actually works at a

sex toy factory near Portland...or used to work there...and he accumulated defective dildos that were going to be thrown out

seriously I was told that story...it sounded plausible when I was told

- selmabouvierterwilligerhutzmcclureHoldenCash
7/14/15 10:36pm

I so hope this is true!

- GregSamsaHoldenCash
7/14/15 10:54pm

What exactly constitutes a 'defective' dildo? I mean, not that I know from personal expereince, but things don't need to look like a dick to go into... places. And even if they're supposed to look like a dick but don't, the item will work just fine.

- Thunder-LipsHudson Hongo
7/14/15 10:08pm

I have always wondered why dildos have balls....is that how ya tell front to back?! I mean dildo balls are pretty useless right?!

- LasEstrellasThunder-Lips
7/14/15 10:10pm

A lot of the reason is so that they don't get "lost" internally.

- Armageddon T. ThunderbirdThunder-Lips
7/14/15 10:14pm

If you manage to get the balls into your ass too, you deserve the ER trip.

- HypnoCatThunder-Lips
7/14/15 10:16pm

I *just* posted the same thing. I don't get it.

- Johnny ChundersThunder-Lips
7/14/15 10:17pm

The realistic balls prevent the dongy part from becoming irretrievably lost in an orifice.

Show more replies in this thread

- TRUMP DELENDUS EST (fka Chatham Harrison)Hudson Hongo
7/14/15 10:03pm

Dildos, dangling everywhere.

Shortest erotica ever. Take that, Hemingway.

- GregSamsaTRUMP DELENDUS EST (fka Chatham Harrison)

7/14/15 10:07pm

Dangling dildo, never used.

- Iron Sausage EveningTRUMP DELENDUS EST (fka Chatham Harrison)
7/14/15 10:15pm

I believe *Dildos, dangling everywhere* is the title of the next Modest Mouse release.

- Sean BrodyGregSamsa
7/14/15 10:18pm

> Dangling dildo, never used.

That got an audible

- halfemptyhoneyjarTRUMP DELENDUS EST (fka Chatham Harrison)
7/14/15 10:34pm

+6 words

- Tishthedish11Hudson Hongo
7/14/15 10:04pm

Dildos are expensive. Who has this kind of money to burn?

- Wheezer801Tishthedish11
7/14/15 10:06pm

Right? Especially the ones with the suction cup base.

...not that I've priced them or anything. I just heard. From a friend.

- Johnny ChundersTishthedish11
7/14/15 10:14pm

Maybe they are secondhand or consignment dildos?

- Emerald D.V.Tishthedish11
7/14/15 10:16pm

Maybe someone hijacked a container full of dildos coming over from China. Portland is a port, after all.

- KaidogJohnny Chunders
7/14/15 10:22pm

I simply cannot imagine purchasing a secondhand dildo, for any reason at all whatsoever.

- HypnoCatHudson Hongo
7/14/15 10:14pm

I don't really get the point of adding balls to a dildo. Is that "realistic touch" there to convince someone it's real?

- Masshole JamesHypnoCat
7/14/15 10:20pm

It's so that it doesn't disappear totally into whatever lucky individual is being dildoed. I'm so moving to Portland!

- jt.hazedHypnoCat
7/14/15 10:39pm

Why don't people know this?? To keep it from going completely inside.

- BoxTurtleHypnoCat
7/14/15 11:15pm

It's so they don't fall into an orifice, requiring an ER trip to retrieve. It also makes it easier to fasten them into a harness.

- HypnoCatjt.hazed
7/14/15 11:26pm

I can't speak for men, but for women, there are already natural limitations.

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University of Connecticut loses track of 15 skulls

bostonherald.com



BHR Logo

Associated Press Wednesday, August 03, 2016

FARMINGTON, Conn. — Fifteen human skulls are among more than 100 items that went unaccounted for in a routine inventory at the University of Connecticut Health Center.

The Hartford Courant reports UConn officials submitted a report last month to the state auditor's office saying the skulls could not be found during two internal searches and an independent inventory by a private company.

But a UConn spokeswoman, Stephanie Reitz, said Wednesday that the skulls have since been accounted for and were never lost. She says some skulls did not have tags saying when they were acquired but they were always part of a larger collection.

She said it is difficult logistically to add inventory tags to skulls, which are used by UConn Health's medical and dental schools for teaching purposes.

—

This story has been corrected to show that UConn says the skulls were unaccounted for in an inventory, not missing.

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Unusual cause of death for victim found inside toolbox

2016/08/05 wave3.com

Friday, August 5th 2016, 10:19 am PDTFriday, August 5th 2016, 12:24 pm PDT
By Joey Brown, Digital Content Manager

LEITCHFIELD, KY (WAVE) - The male victim found dead inside a large toolbox in a Grayson County creek died of multi-modal asphyxiation.

Grayson County Coroner Joe Brad Hudson said that means the victim, who has not been identified, was suffocated or strangled using more than one method at the same time.

Someone found the toolbox and the body on Tuesday near Spring Fork Bridge on Short Creek and notified the Grayson County Sheriff's Office.

Kentucky State Police is leading the investigation.

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Eating too much cheese left me in a wheelchair: woman 'caught rare disease from unvaccinated foreign goat'

telegraph.co.uk

The Telegraph

Eating too much cheese left me in a wheelchair: woman 'caught rare disease from unvaccinated foreign goat'

Sam Philpott says she caught Brucellosis from the cheese

- Telegraph Reporters

28 July 2016 • 1:43pm

A British holidaymaker says she was left in a wheelchair by a bacterial infection she picked up from eating unpasteurised cheese in Greece.

Sam Philpott, 22, says the “significant amount” of cheese she consumed from unvaccinated goats while in Kos is responsible for her condition.

In 2013, weeks after travelling to the Greek island with her parents Ian, 52, and Tracey, 51, Miss Philpott fell ill. She suffered debilitating migraines, constant vomiting and nausea, fevers and shakes, crippling weakness, exhaustion, fatigue and “incapacitating pain”.

Her condition has deteriorated over three years and Miss Philpott, of Walsall, West Midlands, is now bedbound, in pain, and unable to walk.

"Who knew that unpasteurised cheese could cause the mind-numbing and wanting-to-end-my-life type of pain that I have been suffering with"Sam Philpott

The former nursery assistant also suffers from list of extreme flu-like symptoms, with the addition of memory loss, insomnia and speech loss.

The young woman believes she contracted Brucellosis from eating an unvaccinated goat's cheese in Greece.

Brucellosis is a bacterial infection originating from animals and can cause long-lasting flu-like symptoms. It is effectively wiped out in the UK through vaccination of animals but can be transmitted if products from an infected animal are not pasteurised.

"Who knew that unpasteurised cheese; that is delicious and has brought me much momentary happiness, could cause the mind-numbing and wanting-to-end-my-life type of pain that I have been suffering with," Miss Philpott told *The Mirror.*

She added: “While in Kos in 2013 I enjoyed some lovely goat's cheese on my pizzas, spread on my sandwiches, and in my salad.

"With each mouthful, to my unfortunate complete lack of knowledge and utter surprise, I was ingesting the bacteria that has led to my being bedridden."

Miss Philpott also suffers from fibromyalgia - a condition characterised by widespread pain and profound fatigue - and is being treated for both Brucellosis and Lyme disease as they carry similar

symptoms.

She is currently receiving medical care in Florida, receiving intravenous therapy treatment - the infusion of antibiotics and vitamin supplements directly into the vein - after her immune system shut down.

Her brother, Joe Philpott, 24, of Bracknell, Berkshire, told *The Mirror*: “At the clinic, they have said she is one of the worst patients they have seen, in terms of how far her illness has progressed.

“Doctors believe that she more than likely contracted Brucellosis the summer she was in Kos- so they think it is linked to eating cheese.”

The symptoms fit the diagnosis and Brucellosis now causing his sister significant pain in her spine, Mr Philpott added.

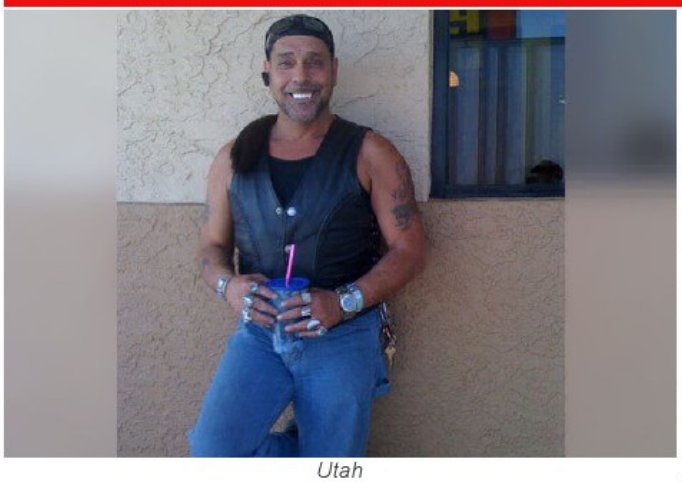
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Credit: Philip Hollis for The Telegraph

Utah 'Vampire Trucker' Pleads Guilty to Having Sex Slaves in His Truck

cdanews.com





Utah

In **Utah**, Timothy Jay Vafeades, 56, a truck driver known as the "Vampire Trucker," because he allegedly was obsessed with vampires and filed his victims' teeth down with a power tool, pleaded guilty in court of having sex slaves in his truck as he drove across the country, according to CBS Minnesota. On Thursday, Vafeades made a deal with prosecutors, just days before the his trial was scheduled to commence.

On June 30, Vafeades was charged with having kept two women, ages 18 and 19, captive in his semi-trailer after he lured them there. SFGate reported that he allegedly altered their appearances, ground their teeth down, and held them prisoner for several months. According to prosecutors, the so-called "Vampire Trucker," had kept at least four other women as sex slaves in his truck in the decades that led up to his eventual arrest in 2014.

Though their cases would have been too old by now for them to press criminal charges, their testimony would have provided compelling circumstantial evidence that Vafeades had participated in the sexual and physical abuse of women, as well as rape, for a very long time prior to his eventual arrest. The deal Vafeades made with the prosecutors means that he could be faced with serving up to a maximum of 20 years in prison.

Utah 'Vampire Trucker' Pleads Guilty to Having Sex Slaves in His Truck

The 19-year-old woman had known Vafeades before he allegedly held her captive as a sex slave. In 2013, she reportedly voluntarily worked with him on his truck. He called it the "Twilight Express." However, when she decided to leave him, prosecutors said that he attacked her, trapping her in his truck, where he allegedly then sexually assaulted her time and again over a six-month time frame. According to authorities, during the time she was allegedly imprisoned by Vafeades, he made her wear a set of fake teeth and he wore one with vampire fangs.

The "Vampire Trucker" was arrested when he pulled into a weigh station in Minnesota and officers, who were there, saw the bruised face of the 19-year-old woman in his truck. The officers found out that she had gone to court to get a restraining order against him, barring him from contacting her, before he captured and imprisoned her in his truck.

After Vafeades was arrested, the second young woman, 18, came forward and contacted the Utah police. She stated that she had also been held captive in his truck and he had treated her like she was his sex slave. She alleged that Valfeades had kept her as his sex slave for about three months, threatening her with acts of violence and forcing her to have sex with him on an almost daily basis.

Court documents, according to KSL, mentioned that Vafeades, from Murry, Utah, wore what he termed “slave bracelets” on his wrists. If the women he allegedly kept as sex slaves disobeyed his orders, he reportedly “would hit his victims with the bracelets.”

Attorneys for Vafeades tried to argue that the stop by police officers at the Minnesota weigh station should not have happened. His attorneys asserted that the 19-year-old woman’s protective order was no longer valid when Vafeades was arrested.

Though one of his attorneys, Vanessa Ramos, attempted to get the “judge to bar the evidence seized from his truck,” the judge ruled that the stop had been a valid one.

In return for his plea of guilty “to two counts of transporting for illegal sexual activity” the prosecutors dropped the two kidnapping charges. If he had not agreed to the plea deal and he had been convicted by a jury, Vafeades could have received a sentence of life in prison, according to SFGate. Vafeades will be sentenced in November.

When Vafeades appeared in court on Thursday, he was wearing a pair of glasses and a gray-striped jail jumpsuit. He stood up with his hands shackled in front of him and respectfully answered the judge’s questions. He also read a description of the charges against him, aloud in the courtroom.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Trina Higgins said she hoped that Vafeades’ plea of guilty would help to bring about a sense of closure for the women he had allegedly kept as sex slaves and their families. Attorneys for Vafeades did not make any additional comments.

The Utah man, Timothy Jay Vafeades, who has been nicknamed the “Vampire Trucker,” entered a guilty plea related to the accusations of two women who have said he kept them imprisoned in his semi-trailer as sex slaves for a period of several months. Besides the accusations of the two women, 18 and 19, along with the other four women who were prepared to relate similar stories about what he had done to them if the case had made it to trial, in May, Vafeades pleaded guilty to using his truck to transport child pornography. Prosecutors dropped a second charge of child pornography against him. He is currently being held in the Davis County Jail. For more CDA News, follow our tweets on Twitter and like us on Facebook.

By John Samuels

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Utah man known as 'Vampire Truck Driver' pleads guilty in federal sex slavery case

by Cimaron Neugebauer

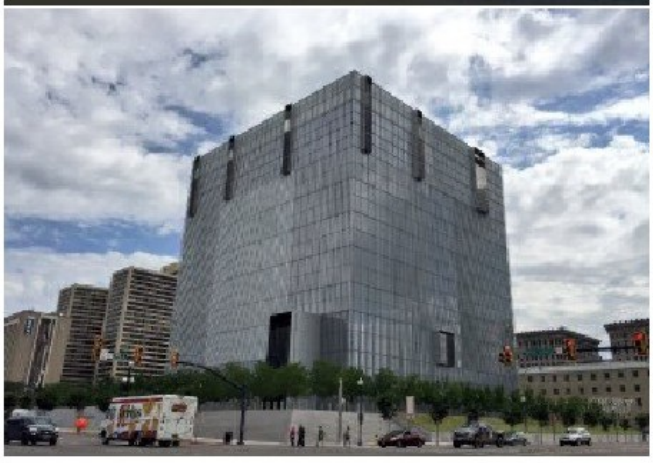
wwmt.com



(**KUTV**) A Utah man known as the "Vampire Truck Driver" pleaded guilty in federal court Thursday to a sex slavery case where he admitted to transporting women across state lines for months while sexually assaulting them, changed his plea weeks before a jury trial was set to begin.



Timothy Jay Vafeades, 56, pleaded guilty in U.S. District federal court to two counts out of six in an indictment from 2014. Two of the counts were for transportation for illegal sexual activity. The plea agreement, accepted by the judge on Thursday morning in Salt Lake City carries with it a possible sentence of 20 years in prison. In May Vafeades also pleaded guilty to count 5, transportation of child pornography. Vafeades will be sentenced in November.



"If you plead guilty you relieve the government the burden of proving your guilt at trial," U.S District Court Judge David Nuffer told Vafeades as he advised him of his rights.

Vafeades did not speak during the plea other than to say he understood his rights and decided to proceed with his change of plea. He did have one question for the judge. In response the judge asked if Vafeades wanted to consult with his attorneys before asking him a question. After speaking with his attorneys, the man responded by apologizing to the judge.

He gained the nickname of "Vampire Truck Driver" because he had dentures made with two front teeth in the form of vampire fangs, according to federal charging documents. It is also believed that he has more victims than just two, records state.

Court records state Vafeades lured two women aged 18 and 19 at the time into his semi-tractor trailer truck he called "Twilight Express" and held them prisoner for months. He forcibly altered their



appearance and said he did not like one woman's crooked teeth and thought she had an ugly smile, so he shaved her teeth down with a Dremel grinding tool and chipped her teeth with an X-acto knife so she could wear false teeth he ordered to put over her real teeth, according to federal court records.

On March 26, 2014 Vafeades was indicted on two counts of kidnapping, two counts of transportation for illegal sexual activity, transportation of child pornography and possession of child pornography.

Originally Vafeades pleaded not guilty to the charges and a three-week jury trial was scheduled for July 5-22 of this year, but was canceled due to the change of plea, according to federal court records.

One of Vafeades's victims was in Salt Lake City in May of 2013 to start working for his over-the-road trucking business, according to charging documents. Soon after the victim arrived, she told Vafeades she wanted to go back to her home in Florida, but he threatened and assaulted the 19-year-old woman, federal court records state. He regularly beat the woman, controlled her with fear and didn't allow her to make eye contact with anyone. News of Vafeades' arrest prompted another woman from Utah to also report her story to authorities. KUTV 2News spoke with that victim in 2014, who asked that she not be identified.

She told Chris Jones she met Vafeades in April of 2012 while she was filling up her car with gas. The two started a conversation and he invited her to dinner.

"Once we got in the truck, I thought we were going out to eat," she said. "We had just got on the freeway, and I said, 'Why are we going this way? There are no restaurants this way.'"

The next three months Vafeades held her against her will, raped her, beat her, cut her hair and forced her to change its color, she said.

"He beat me with a belt as if I was a little two-year-old getting spanked to the point where I should have passed out and died," she said. Her teeth were also ground down like the other victim's with an electric filing tool. It wasn't until Vafeades drove his truck through a weigh station in Nebraska that she was rescued after Department of Transportation officials noticed bruises on her arms, and they took her from Vafeades.

She can't believe she survived the three-month sex slavery.

"I shouldn't be here. I should be dead and gone ... there's a higher power, there is a reason why I am here."

In addition to these two victims, federal prosecutors introduced new evidence of four other women who they say were abused and assaulted by Vafeades in very similar ways between 1994 and 2013, but those cases weren't prosecuted because they were too old for new charges.

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Mysterious green foam found bubbling in Utah storm drain

17:40 EST, 22 July 2016 | dailymail.co.uk

Daily Mail .com
MailOnline US - news, sport, celebrity, science and health stories

Who you gonna call? Mysterious green slime bubbles up from sewers in Utah town

- **The foam was spotted by residents on Thursday in Bluffdale**
- **Early reports indicated the foam was caused by same algae in Utah Lake**
- **The foam came from the Welby Jacob Canal, which is connected to the Jordan River - which is Utah Lake's only river outlet**
- **But health officials believe foam may have been caused by chemicals used for a moss removal process in the canal**
- **Those exposed to lake's bloom had symptoms of vomiting, diarrhea, fever**

By Anneta Konstantinides For Dailymail.com

A mysterious green foam has left neighbors of one Utah neighborhood more than a little concerned after it was spotted bubbling from a storm drain on Thursday.

The Salt Lake County Health Department immediately sent both its emergency response team as well as scientists to test the bright green foam after it was reported in the Bluffdale neighborhood.

Early reports indicated that the foam was caused by a toxic algae bloom that currently covers 90 percent of Utah Lake - and has already caused more than 100 people to fall ill.



The Salt Lake County Health Department immediately sent its emergency response team to Bluffdale, Utah after residents spotted this mysterious green foam bubbling from a storm drain in the neighborhood



The foam was sourced to the nearby Welby Jacob Canal, which feeds water to local farms. The canal is connected to the Jordan River, which is connected to Utah Lake

The foam was sourced to the nearby Welby Jacob Canal, which feeds water to local farms. The canal is connected to the Jordan River, which is connected to Utah Lake.

'It's certainly possible that the water in the Welby Canal here does have some of that particular harmful algae that produces toxins in it,' department official Nicholas Rupp told Fox 13 Now.

But Rupp said the foam is more likely the result of a recent moss removal process the canal underwent earlier this month.

'The chemicals that they use for the moss prevention process foams and causes a foaming action,' Rupp said.

But just because the toxic algae didn't cause the green foam doesn't necessarily mean it isn't present in the canal.

Rupp said the department tested water in the canal just to make sure. Results are expected in the next few days, according to KUTV.

The foam began to recede after the irrigation line to the canal was shut off, Bluffdale city engineer Michael Fazio told KSL.



The department believes the foam was likely caused by chemicals used for a recent moss removal process the canal underwent earlier this month



Firefighters protected themselves with masks and gloves while hosing the green substance down the sewer

Firefighters protected themselves with masks and gloves while hosing the green substance back into the sewer.

The department said the foam does not pose a concern to public health at this time.

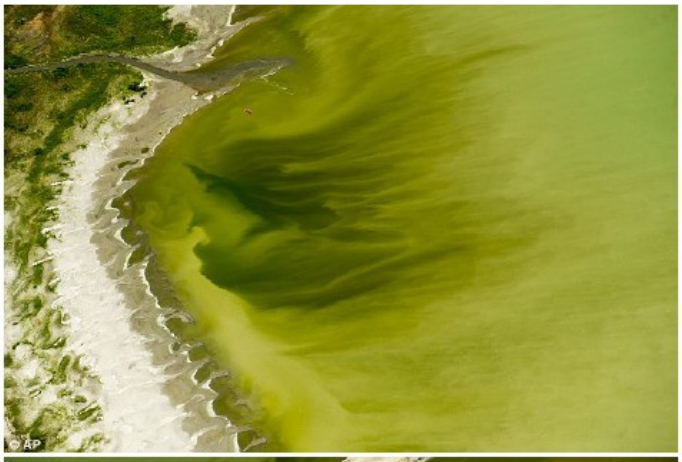
Meanwhile, all activities at Utah Lake have been canceled indefinitely after it was revealed the toxic algal bloom covering the water was becoming more hazardous.

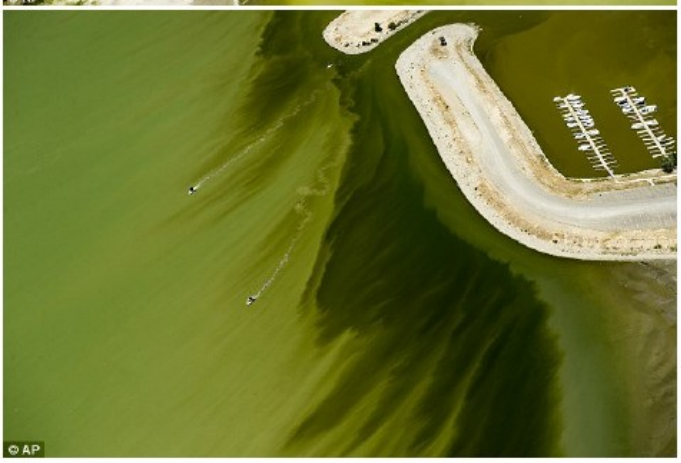
Cyanobacteria cells release higher levels of toxins into the water as they die - making the water more lethal even as the number of cells drop in the lake, which lies in Utah Valley.

More than 100 people exposed to the bloom called the Utah Poison Control Center last Friday, reporting symptoms of vomiting, diarrhea, fever, skin and eye irritation and rashes.

Although no definitive link has yet been made with the symptoms and the bloom, officials said they were consistent with cyanotoxin exposure.

The majority of samples collected last Thursday exceeded the 'medium risk' threshold of 100,000 cells defined by the Worth Health Organization and the Utah Department of Health guidelines.





Early reports indicated that the foam was caused by a toxic algae bloom that currently covers 90 percent of Utah Lake - and has already sent more than 100 people to the hospital

More than 100 people exposed to the bloom called the Utah Poison Control Center last Friday, reporting symptoms of vomiting, diarrhea, fever, skin and eye irritation and rashes

One such sample contained nearly 700,000 cyanobacteria cells.

Even when algae blooms don't appear on the surface of the lake, they could still be present - as cyanobacteria can sink in certain conditions.

'Toxins can be at their highest after a bloom has subsided,' warned a release issued by the Department of Environmental Quality this week.

Sampling collections continued on the lake last week, while crews from the Utah Division of Water Quality also observed additional bloom areas from an aerial viewpoint.

Water in the Jordan River, the lake's only river outlet, as well as canals fed by the lake were also being tested to see if the bloom was spreading, according to the Salt Lake Tribune.

The Utah Department of Agriculture and Food strongly advised farmers and ranchers to avoid using water from the lake to irrigate crops and give to livestock until results are made available next week.

The Salt Lake County Health Department said drinking water was not affected by the bloom.

Recent studies have linked cyanobacteria-producing toxins to Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, or Lou Gehrig's disease, which causes the death of neurons that control voluntary muscles.

The department tested water in the canal to see if it had been exposed to the lake's toxic algae bloom

Reidisthecancerman, New York, 26 minutes ago

Better call Ghostbusters...

Reidisthecancerman, New York, 26 minutes ago

Better call Ghostbusters...



scratchud, Chicago, about an hour ago

The ...."BLOB"!!!

scratchud, Chicago, about an hour ago

The...."BLOB"!!

DDRed, Dallas, about an hour ago

After eight years in office this is what the benefits of Obama are.

Herbert Walker, Hollywood, United States, about an hour ago

I bet this is just a promotional stunt for the new Ghostbusters movie.

PigEase.Com, Zephyr Cove, United States, about 2 hours ago

Whoever is throwing the Chicken McNuggets in the sewer, please stop now.

PigEase.Com, Zephyr Cove, United States, about 2 hours ago

Whoever is throwing the Chicken McNuggets in the sewer, please stop now.

Mystacall23, USA, United States, about 2 hours ago

real nice Utah...poison your water, humans, and animals....

Dave In Arizona, Chandler, United States, about 3 hours ago

Hmm. A little early. Wasn't supposed to show up until November 8 to vote for Hillary. Green slime has always had a poor sense of time.

Published by Associated Newspapers Ltd

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VAMPIRE CULT IN PANAMA CITY FL KILLS TEENAGER AND DRINKS HIS BLOOD, STEPHANIE PISTEY CLAIMS SHE'S A VAMPIRE AND PART WEREWOLF.

wordpress.com

https://pibillwarner.wordpress.com/2011/10/02/vampire-cult-in-panama-city-fl-kills-teenager-and-drinks-his-blood-stephanie-pistey-claims-shes-a-vampire-and-part-werewolf/

Sarasota Private Investigator Bill Warner 'Better Call Bill' 941-926-1926
Over 7,500,000 Views of our Website and Blogs, Contact me wbipi@verizon.net BILL WARNER INVESTIGATIONS 2100 CONSTITUTION BLVD SARASOTA FL-941-926-1926. CHEATERS & CHILD CUSTODY CASES. All Posts based on Public Records are my OPINION and protected by the 1st Amendment of the US Constitution. P.I. Bill Warner seen on CNN, FOX NEWS, INSIDE EDITION. FI Lic A-9500364. BILL WARNER INVESTIGATIONS Florida based global research firm specializing in political violence, criminal profiling and terrorism since 1995. P.I. Bill Warner worked on terrorism cases with FBI, ICE and Secret Service.

VAMPIRE CULT IN PANAMA CITY FL KILLS TEENAGER AND DRINKS HIS BLOOD, STEPHANIE PISTEY CLAIMS SHE'S A VAMPIRE AND PART WEREWOLF.

Posted on October 2, 2011 | Comments Off on VAMPIRE CULT IN PANAMA CITY FL KILLS TEENAGER AND DRINKS HIS BLOOD, STEPHANIE PISTEY CLAIMS SHE'S A VAMPIRE AND PART WEREWOLF.

Sunday, October 02, 2011



SPRING BREAK HAVEN OF PANAMA CITY FL HOME TO VAMPIRE CULT…A woman who cops arrested in Panama City, Fl for being an accessory to murder after she allegedly persuaded a group of men to attack a 16-year-old she claimed had raped her told WJHG-TV she's a vampire who's part werewolf, and that she even drank the blood of her fiancé.

Cops said the men who allegedly killed Jacob Hendershot in July were friends with Stephanie Pistey, 18, and they belonged to a cult of vampires. "Since I was like, 12… I know this is going to be crazy, but I believe that I'm a vampire," she said. "Part of a vampire and part of a werewolf." She's one of five people facing charges of murder or being an accessory after the fact.

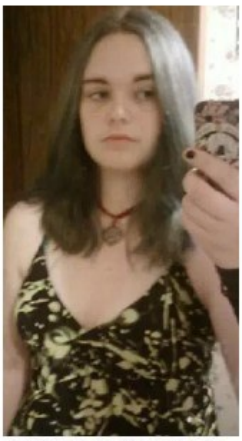
WHITE TRASH IN PANAMA CITY SPAWNS WHITE TRASH VAMPIRES, COULD PANAMA CITY FL BECOME ANYMORE OF A CESSPOOL OF REJECTS, GRIFTERS, STRIPPERS/HOOKERS, EX-CONS, SEX OFFENDERS AND NOW VAMPIRES?

PANAMA CITY FL Oct. 2nd, 2011…Family grieves after son's slaying. The people who knew him best said Jacob Hendershot had little in common with the people accused of killing him. They believe it was the one person they had in common that might have lured him to his

death. Some of the suspects in his death have described themselves in media reports as belonging to a "vampire cult," and said they drank one another's blood and hated God.

Jake, as he was known by friends and family, was a Christian who traveled to South America on a mission trip to dig wells in jungle villages. The experience made him a better person, said his mom, Tommae Hendershot. His dad, Melvin Hendershot, said the teenager returned excited.

"He wasn't a bad boy," Tommae Hendershot said. "He was just an unhappy boy because his mom and dad got divorced." He came to Florida over the summer because he wanted to spend time with his birth mother, Nancy Robinson, who gave Jake up for adoption shortly after his birth. She wasn't ready to be a mom, Robinson said. Jake arrived in Panama City Florida on June 22. He was killed July 13, police said.


PANAMA CITY VAMPIRE

In the short time he was here, he met a (vampire) girl, Stephanie Pistey, and they struck up a brief romance, despite their differences. "Jake was a call-home type of kid," Tommae Hendershot said. Pistey would say she lied to her parents about being at Jake's when she was actually somewhere else. She was 18; he was 16. He wore a crucifix around his neck; she wore a pentagram around hers. Police believe Jacob Hendershot still would be alive if he'd never met her.

The Panama City vampire cult murder suspects of Jacob Hendershot are;
1.) William Henry Chase, 17.
2). Joel Millsap, 26.
3). Stephanie Pistey, 18.
4). James Gay
5). Tammy Morris

The arrest affidavit against Millsap and Chase mentioned two unknown males who were involved in the attack on Hendershot, which occurred July 13 at Millsap's apartment. Millsap invited Hendershot over, and four men jumped and beat him upon his arrival, investigators reported. Hendershot's mother called police the next day to report that her son had not come home the night before. The affidavit says both men confessed to killing Hendershot, stripping him and putting his body in a stormwater culvert.

Bill Warner Sarasota Private Investigator, SEX, CRIME, CHEATERS & TERRORISM at www.wbipi.com

Posted by BILL WARNER at 4:28 PM
This entry was posted in Bill Warner is a private investigator in Sarasota Fl., PANAMA CITY AND PANAMA CITY BEACH FL CRIME UPDATES, PANAMA CITY BEACH FLORIDA Bill Warner Florida private investigator, WHITE TRASH IN PANAMA CITY SPAWNS WHITE TRASH VAMPIRES and tagged STEPHANIE PISTEY CLAIMS SHE'S A VAMPIRE AND PART WEREWOLF., VAMPIRE CULT IN PANAMA CITY FL KILLS TEENAGER AND DRINKS HIS BLOOD. Bookmark the permalink.

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Jacob Hendershot, Stephanie Pistey: Case Of Werewolf, Vampire Cult Teens Who Killed For Blood In Parker, Florida, On 'Murder Among Friends' Tonight On ID

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The Inquisitr

June 28, 2016

Jacob Hendershot, Stephanie Pistey: Case Of Werewolf, Vampire Cult Teens Who Killed For Blood In Parker, Florida, On 'Murder Among Friends' Tonight On ID



jacob-hendershot-william-chase-joel-millsap, drainage-ditch

Jacob Hendershot was a 16-year-old teen who was chased down and murdered by friends of Stephanie Pistey who were all part of a vampire cult in Parker, Florida. The murder occurred in 2011, and this week Investigation Discovery's hit crime television show *Murder Among Friends* will profile Hendershot's ghastly death. The episode, titled "Unholy Friends," will provide the account of how a Christian teen on a hot summer visit to see his biological mother leads him directly into the path of a group of sadistic teens with a taste for blood.

Teen's Nude Body Found In Drainage Ditch

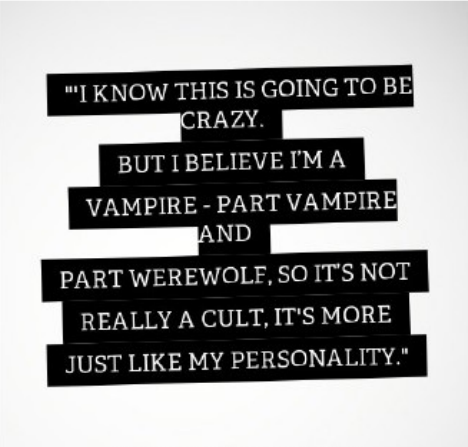
The body of Jacob "Jake" Hendershot was found in a cement storm drain at the field across the street from his mother's home, just one month after he was reported missing. An autopsy report determined that Hendershot's throat was cut, and he had been choked.

Jacob Hendershot's biological mother reported him missing after the teen failed to return home before midnight as he had planned. He was last seen by his mother's boyfriend, who told police that Jacob returned home briefly to grab a bottle of wine to take back to the party.

Jacob had just arrived to his mother's home in Parker, Florida. He had been looking forward to reconnecting with her since she was his biological mom. At birth, Jacob Hendershot, who everyone calls Jake, was given up for adoption to be raised by his grandparents in Indiana.

By all accounts, they raised a fine Christian boy who was good-hearted and loving. However, Jacob wanted to find his real mother and was excited to live with her over the summer months. It didn't take long before he quickly made new friends in the small waterfront town.

One of the first people Jacob met on his trip to Florida was Stephanie Pistey, an 18-year-old teen who they say lived by the dumpster. The first time that Jacob's mom met Stephanie Pistey, she didn't like her at all. The Gothic girl had blue hair and wore ribbons around her neck and had a way about her that seemed sassy, confident, but wicked all at the same time. Jacob's mother had every



[Image made via Recite]

reason to be put off by Pistey, who hung out with other local teens who were known to do drugs and alcohol.

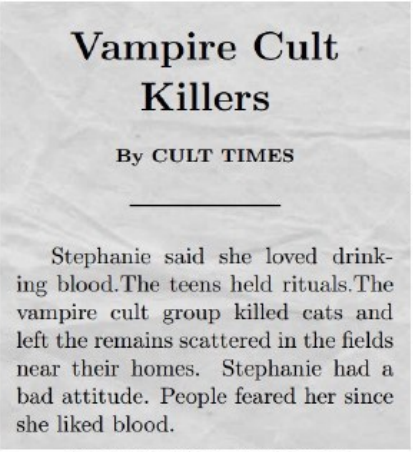


[Image via Facebook]

When Jacob Hendershot disappeared, police thought he could be a runaway, since he was from another state. They searched for him but were unsuccessful. Jacob Hendershot's mother told them that he was hanging out with Williams Chase and Joel Mishap. When questioned by police, William Chase told detectives that he last saw Jacob when he left his home in the middle of the night.

What truly happened to Jacob became clear after police received a tip from a local mom who told detectives that they needed to check Facebook because a group of teens were talking about the case.

Sure enough, when detectives logged on to social media, they could see several people bragging about what they "could have" possibly done to Jacob. Turns out Stephanie Pistey and her friends were all part of a vampire cult.



Vampire Cult Killers

By CULT TIMES

Stephanie said she loved drinking blood.The teens held rituals.The vampire cult group killed cats and left the remains scattered in the fields near their homes. Stephanie had a bad attitude. People feared her since she liked blood.

[Image made via Jaguarpaw]

The Real Motive Behind The Teen Vampire Killing

In the end, 17-year-old William Henry Chase, 26-year-old Joel Millsap, 18-year-old Stephanie Pistey, 20-year-old James Gay, and 30-year-old Tammy Morris were all arrested for Jacob Hendershot's murder. Stephanie Pistey told investigators that she was babysitting for Tammy Lee Morris at the time of the murder. William Chase eventually led police to where they could find Jacob's body. The investigation further revealed that his senseless murder was all part of a plot to kill him because William Chase became enraged when Stephanie told him that Jacob had raped her.

The rape turned out to be a lie to cover over the fact that Stephanie Pistey had dated Jacob behind William Chase's back. Chase was also led to believe that Pistey wanted Jacob Hendershot dead because she wanted to drink his blood, something that she failed to do once she actually saw Hendershot's dead body. (Some accounts allege that she did actually drink some blood after the murder).

> In 2011, Stephanie Pistey, a Florida teenager, claimed she murdered a fellow teenager because she was part werewolf and part vampire
>
> — Trivia Hive (@TriviaHive) October 30, 2015

Authorities say that Pistey was upset that Jacob Hendershot looked down on her when she told him that she liked to drink blood and that she was a vampire. Before his death, Hendershot told his mother that he believed Stephanie was crazy and wanted nothing more to do with her. Most

certainly, his Christian upbringing wouldn't have allowed him to think that any form of Satanic behavior was OK.

> Wait? What? ►►► RT @thepulpbpb: Stephanie Pistey, arrested in boy's death and admits she's a vampire/werewolf hybrid http://t.co/rEE7C8RI
>
> — Headly Westerfield (@Aunty__Em) September 28, 2011
>
> Stephanie Pistey's Facebook Found: Vampire Murder Suspect (VIDEO) "i hate god": We have found Stephanie Pistey's… http://t.co/6vPbO1eN
>
> — PostChronicle.com (@PostChronicle) September 28, 2011
>
> VAMPIRE CULT IN PANAMA CITY FL KILLS TEENAGER AND DRINKS HIS BLOOD, STEPHANIE PISTEY CLAIMS SHE'S A VAMPIRE AND PART… http://t.co/momvLV3H
>
> — P.I. Bill Warner SRQ (@billdetective) October 2, 2011

As for William Chase and the others, they all did it for their ringleader, Stephanie Pistey. At trial, prosecutors say that Jacob Hendershot left his mother's birthday party to hang out with William Chase and Joel Millsap after they came to his home.

Jacob partied with Millsap and Chase at their house and came back to his own home to grab some booze. When he went back to the party, he was ambushed. Jacob Hendershot tried to run outside, but the guys chased him down and cut his throat, then they met Stephanie back at the house to try to cover up what they had done by putting his body inside a concrete drainage ditch.

A Florida jury found William Chase and Joel Mishap guilty and gave them 25 years in prison. James Gay was sentenced to 15 years, and Stephanie Pistey was sentenced to 12 years. Tammy Morris was released on parole.

Watch this week's *Murder Among Friends* tonight at 10/9 p.m. Central on Investigation Discovery (ID). A few weeks back, *Murder Among Friends* aired the sex slave master case involving Brittany Killgore.

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'Vampire voters': Greens volunteer 'bitten' outside polling station over election material

news.yahoo.com

Caity Stone - Yahoo7 News on July 2, 2016, 3:39 pm



'Vampire voters': Greens volunteer 'bitten' outside polling station over views

Violence has erupted in the battle for the seat of Higgins after police have been asked to investigate an alleged 'biting' incident.

On election eve a Greens volunteer was reportedly bitten by a backer of assistant treasurer Kelly O'Dwyer outside a polling station.

Police were informed that the 48-year-old woman was sitting in her stationary vehicle with a friend when two men- both aged in their 60s- approached her car.



The men allegedly approached a car the volunteers were sitting in and made comments about election material. Kelly O'Dwyer photographed with Malcolm Turnbull above. Source: AAP image.

The two men allegedly made comments about the election material to the volunteer.

According to Fairfax after one of the volunteers tried to take a photo, a physical altercation occurred during which the female volunteer was bitten, resulting in her having a "sore thumb".

"We were both pretty shaken, we quickly called the police and went down to Prahran police station and made a statement," Stonnington Greens branch co-treasurer Michael McCormack, a witness to the incident, told Fairfax.

"Two men approached us in the car, upset the Greens had put posters and other things up - we're talking the heartland of Liberaldom here," McCormack said.

"I wound down the window and they got aggressive. We had been advised that if we felt threatened by people we should take their photo.

"My fellow Green took out her phone to do that and the guy reached across me and grabbed her and was trying to pull her phone away."



Violence has erupted in the battle for the seat of Higgins after police have been asked to investigate an alleged 'biting' incident. Source: AAP image.

A Victoria Police spokeswoman said the Greens volunteer was allegedly bitten on the hand, before the two men drove off in a white SUV.

The incident occurred outside Armadale Public School on Densham Road at around 9pm.

No arrests have been made and the investigation remains ongoing.

Yahoo7 reached out to Victoria Police Media for comment.

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Phoenixville man admits vandalizing grave over 56-year grudge

By Kaitlyn Foti , The Mercury

pottsmerc.com

THE MERCURY
The Mercury

NORRISTOWN >> A Phoenixville man admitted in court that he vandalized the tombstone of a man against whom he held a grudge for more than 50 years.

Paul E. Donovan Jr., 69, of the 1200 block of South Evergreen Drive, pleaded guilty Tuesday in Montgomery County Court to a misdemeanor charge of institutional vandalism of a cemetery in front of President Judge William T. Furber, according to court documents.

Donovan was sentenced to two years of probation and ordered to pay $1,500 in restitution to the family of the deceased. He was also ordered to stay away from the tombstone in the cemetery.

According to the criminal complaint, Donovan told police that he and the deceased were childhood friends, and that 56 years ago, the deceased stole $300 from a box in his bedroom.

When police questioned Donovan, he admitted to defacing the tombstone.

The investigation began when a woman reported on March 22, 2014, that her father's tombstone in Saint Matthews Cemetery in Whitemarsh Township had the name "John" written over it in orange spray paint, according to the criminal complaint. The same tombstone was vandalized again with the same name in the same color spray paint April 29, 2014, the woman reported to Whitemarsh police.

In December, someone damaged the tombstone by pouring a "black tar-like" substance over it, the complaint said. Police set up hidden cameras to catch any future acts of vandalism. In May, the cameras caught the image of a man stealing lights that had been set up to deter vandalism, the complaint said.

After the tombstone was vandalized again in November, this time with black spray paint covering the last name of the deceased, police were able to identify the suspect as Donovan.

Donovan told police he would "pay back any restitution minus the $300 he was owed over 56 years ago," Detective G. Lattanze wrote in the complaint.

- Full bio and more articles by Kaitlyn Foti

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Vandals Destroyed 8,000-Year-Old Aboriginal Artworks in Tasmania

smithsonianmag.com

The priceless rock art is damaged beyond repair



<img src="http://thumbs.media.smithsonianmag.com//filer/30/90/3090a93e-72d2-4429-8951-580cc5e6ddc5/hand-stencil.jpg__800x600_q85_crop.jpg" alt="hand stencil" itemprop="image">

One of the destroyed handprints. (Courtesy of the Tasmanian Aboriginal Center)

By Danny Lewis
smithsonian.com
June 8, 2016

For millennia, Tasmania's Nirmena Nala rock shelter has preserved a set of stenciled handprints made by the ancestors of Australia's Aboriginal people. The delicate ocher handprints have withstood the test of time for thousands of years, yet they likely only took minutes to destroy: in late May, conservationists with the Tasmanian Aboriginal Center (TAC) discovered that the precious artworks had been scratched over by vandals.

"They're several thousand years old, priceless and hugely important to the Aboriginal community and somebody has recently gone in their and scratched away the images with a rock to try and deface them." TAC heritage officer Adam Thompson tells Ted O'Connor for the *Australian Broadcasting Corporation*.

The hand stencils are located in an upper region of the Australian island's Derwent Valley. Historians believe that they were made by the Big River people, also known as the teen toomele menennye, and may have been made as they traveled to a nearby meeting site. Many Tasmanian aborigines still consider Nirmena Nala a sacred site, not to mention a precious link to their culture's history, Sarah Cascone reports for *artnet News*.

As Clyde Mansell, chairman of the Tasmanian Aboriginal Land Council, tells Calla Wahlquist for the *Guardian Australia*, the importance of the stencils isn't just about the work itself, but the story that goes with it.

"What makes it sacred is the way in which it was used, and the process that went into making those hand stencils," he says. "If we can't protect that hand stencil, then we can't keep it in our interpretation for generations to come."

The destroyed stencils were some of just a handful of artworks that survived the millennia. What makes their destruction even more devastating for Tasmania's Aboriginal people is that the vandalism was discovered on May 24 – the day before Sorry Day, a national day of remembrance for the horrendous ways that European colonists treated the Aborigines for centuries, Wahlquist reports.

In a statement, the TAC called for the local Tasmanian government to investigate the handprints'

destruction as a criminal act as well as strengthen laws protecting Aboriginal heritage sites from being destroyed by vandals or by developments.

Nirmena Nala in particular is symbolic of this, as it was partly returned to Tasmania's Aboriginal people by government-owned electric company, Hydro Tasmania.

Tasmania police are currently investigating the vandalism case. The Tasmanian premier, Will Hodgman, condemned the damage, and called the Aboriginal Relics Act 1875, which sets out penalties for destroying Aboriginal artifacts, outdated and in need of review, Wahlquist reports.

Under the current law, people found guilty of destroying Aboriginal heritage sites can face either a $1,104 fine (USD) or six months in prison.

"Because these penalties are so low under the existing legislation, there's very little deterrent to stop people from going and doing these activities," Thompson tells O'Connor. "It's priceless and hugely important to the Aboriginal community."



Another destroyed stencil, scratched out with a rock. (Courtesy of the Tasmanian Aboriginal Center)

Another destroyed stencil, scratched out with a rock.

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historyanswers.co.uk

14th May 2015By Frances White

Victoria Helen Duncan and Britain's World War II Witch Trial



On a dreary November night in 1941, a woman sits alone on a stage in a spiritual church in Portsmouth. Dressed in black silk and her head lolling forward, she is watched eagerly by a small crowd of eager spectators in complete silence. Suddenly there is a movement; a white, ghostly figure rises up, dressed in a sailors cap reading 'HMS Barham'. It moves purposely towards a young woman in the audience. It hovers before her and begins to speak in a soft, low voice: "Sorry sweetheart," it utters. "My ship sank in the Mediterranean. I've crossed over to the other side."

This was not an unusual event. As war claimed more and more British lives, many distressed relatives turned to spiritualism to ease their pain, with some 50,000 séance circles popping up all over Britain.

However, this séance was different. Nobody but government officials should have known about the sinking of the HMS Barham. It was classified information. The news of a spiritualist having knowledge of this sensitive information soon caught the attention of far more than desperate widows eager to connect with their lost husbands. The single utterance that this 'vision' had spoken would turn a woman's life upside down and prompt a trial so sensational that it would involve not only her devotees and skeptics, but also the British government itself.



Portrait_of_Helen_Duncan

Victoria Helen Duncan had earned the nickname 'Hellish Nell' in her youth. Thanks to her stubborn and fiery personality, as well as her tomboy tendencies and claims she witnessed ghoulish visions, she stuck out like a sore thumb in her quiet Highland village. Her own mother had tried time and time again to force her daughter to dismiss these silly thoughts of ghostly apparitions, but Nell was adamant – ghosts were real, and she saw them frequently. She had the gift, she was convinced of it.

It wasn't until many years later when she met her husband, Henry Duncan, that Nell began to use her gift to conduct séances. Struggling desperately for money, with six children to feed, Henry encouraged and persuaded his wife to turn her peculiar talent into financial gain. She quickly became popular, so popular in fact that her husband was able to fully devote his time into accompanying his

wife on her travels across the country, serving as her aide. By the late 1920s she had become one of the most famous mediums in the country.



Helen Duncan with her husband, wounded war veteran, Henry Duncan.

People from far and wide appealed for Nell's services, and this was largely thanks to the amazing and shocking sights seen at her séances.

Her séances always began with those involved invited to examine her naked body. Nell would sit, or stand if asked, to confirm that she wasn't hiding any scrap of material that might enable her to fake her powers. Once the spectators were satisfied, she would dress herself in her black silk séance dress and take her place on a makeshift stage. There she would fall into a trance and undergo a metamorphosis into various spirit guides.

There was Albert – a well-traveled and well-spoken Englishman, and Penny, an upbeat and lively child, all very different from the shy Scottish woman with an accent so thick some struggled to understand it. These spirit guides would then reunite the sitters with their loved ones. Most remarkable of all was the existence of 'ectoplasm', this mysterious slimy white substance would allegedly take the form of deceased humans with remarkable likeness and human features.

Such alarming and incredible sights soon caught the attention of skeptics as well as believers. In 1928, a photographer called Harvey Metcalfe photographed séances conducted by Duncan. In the dimly lit room he used flash photography to capture the alleged spirit of Peggy and the strange ectoplasm. What they revealed instead were peculiar dolls comprised of paper mache faces and old sheets. Concerned by the images, in 1931 the London Spiritualist Alliance examined samples of Nell's ectoplasm and determined it to be nothing more than cheesecloth, paper and egg white.

To put the final nail in her spiritual coffin, one of her séances was infiltrated by an undercover policewoman. When 'Peggy' appeared, the policewoman made a grab for the spirit and found herself with a handful of white underwear. Duncan was convicted of fraud and fined £10. Hellish Nell, it seemed, was a fake.

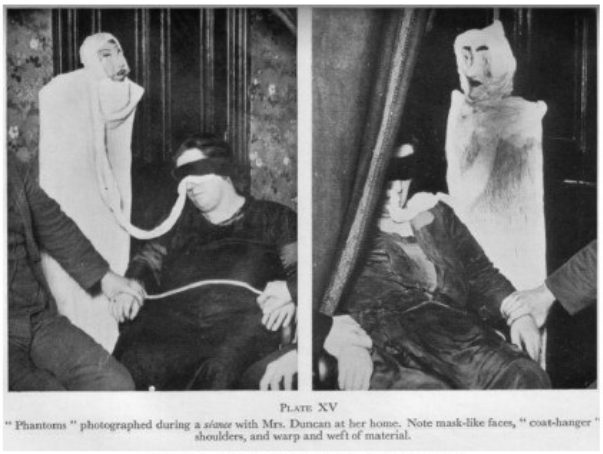


PLATE XV

" Phantoms " photographed during a *séance* with Mrs. Duncan at her home. Note mask-like faces, " coat-hanger " shoulders, and warp and weft of material.

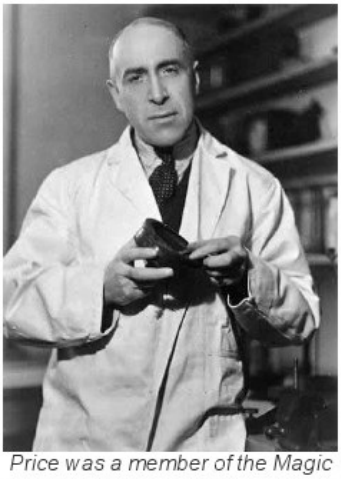
Helen_Duncan_fake_ectoplasm

However, her fans were adamant. Nell had knowledge of their lives and loved ones that she couldn't possibly know – how was it she was able to produce voices so unlike her own that the spirits spoke in?

Nell continued to be in high demand and it was her devotees' firm belief in her skills that attracted Harry Price, a psychical researcher, to the case. Price was acclaimed for his investigations into psychical phenomena but was not purposely out to disprove mediums. In fact, he had certified many mediums who he deemed to be genuine and now he was eager to investigate Nell more closely.

Price paid Nell £50 for a chance to examine her under scientific conditions. Price suspected that Nell swallowed the cheesecloth prior to the séance and then regurgitated it, thereby producing ectoplasm. Upon being faced with an x-ray machine, Nell fell into a hysterical state. Although her husband attempted to soothe her worries, she screamed and punched him hard in the face.

She also made a swing for a doctor who was present before rushing out of the door. She tripped and tore her black satin gown to shreds as she ran, now almost entirely naked, down the steps and fell to her knees. She clutched the iron railings outside of the building, screaming and sobbing into the night. Her husband attempted to pacify her as a crowd formed but it wasn't until the police arrived that she finally calmed and asked to be x-rayed. Suspicious that she had passed the cheesecloth to her husband, Price demanded he turned out his pockets, but he refused – nulling the experiment.



Price was a member of the Magic Circle as well as various psychical research groups.

Finally Nell agreed to a controlled experiment where the researchers would be allowed to take a sample of the ectoplasm. Eager to confirm his suspicions and put all the drama to rest, Price agreed and summed up the events as follows:

"The sight of half a dozen men, each with a pair of scissors waiting for the word, was amusing. It came and we all jumped. One of the doctors got hold of the stuff and secured a piece. The medium screamed and the rest of the "teleplasm" went down her throat. This time it wasn't cheese-cloth. It proved to be paper, soaked in white of egg, and folded into a flattened tube… Could anything be more infantile than a group of grown-up men wasting time, money, and energy on the antics of a fat female crook."



Helen Duncan producing the alleged ectoplasm.

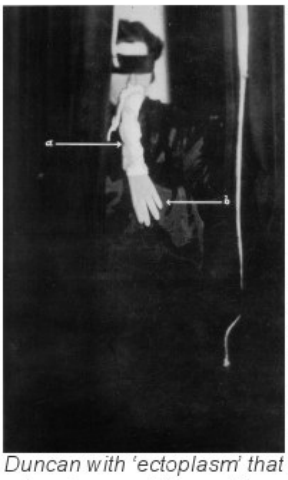
This conclusion had no effect at all on Nell's adoring public, and with the outbreak of World War II she was in greater demand than ever. Except now it wasn't just psychical researchers who were interested in her – but the police and government.

After her HMS Barham prediction in 1941, Nell was being watched very closely, and in 1944 a séance she was conducting was raided by the police. A policeman had hid himself amongst the spectators, blew a whistle and his colleagues streamed into the room. They all made grabs for the ectoplasm, but in the panic it escaped their grasps. The room was searched but they found absolutely nothing. This didn't seem to matter, Nell had pushed her luck for long enough. She was arrested and taken to Portsmouth Magistrates' Court on charges of conspiracy.

But it was an altogether different charge placed against Nell that drew the attention of the country to the case. When the case was transferred to the central criminal courts, it was the Witchcraft Act of 1735 that was cited. Rather than accusing Nell of actually being a witch, and adding any credibility to her act, this ancient act accused Helen of purporting to have the powers of a witch. Regardless of the details, the public was hooked – a witch trial in 1940s Britain? It seemed too unbelievable to be

true. Even Churchill became wrapped up in the trial, angrily penning the below note:

> "HOME SECRETARY
>
> Let me have a report on why the Witchcraft Act of 1735 was used in a modern Court of Justice.
>
> What was the cost of the trial to the state, observing that witnesses were brought from Portsmouth and maintained here in this crowded London for a fortnight, and the Recorder [His Lordship Sir Gerald Dodson] kept busy with all this obsolete tomfoolery."



Duncan with 'ectoplasm' that closely resembles a rubber glove.

Witness after witness was brought out from Nell's circle of faithful, passionately adamant that her abilities were real, and that she had brought relief to their suffering. They claimed to have witnessed not crudely created paper mache masks, but their actual loved ones, emerging out of the darkness as if they were still alive.

It was maintained repeatedly by the defence that it would be impossible for Nell to regurgitate the great amount of cheesecloth allegedly produced. But Nell's own history was against her – the photos taken some 20 years previously, as well as Harry Price, reared their ugly heads for the prosecution. The ectoplasm in the photos looked almost comically fake, the alleged 'faces' were either belonging to dolls or had been cut out of magazines, and a hat bearing the name 'HMS Barham' was discovered in Nell's possessions.

An offer for Nell to perform a live séance from the defendant's dock was rejected by the judge and jury. It seemed that such a show was unnecessary. As the trial reconvened for the verdict, the judge maintained that the verdict was not concerned with whether "genuine manifestations of the kind are possible… this court has nothing to do with such abstract questions. The jury has found this to be a case of plain dishonesty." Nell was found guilty and sentenced to nine months in prison.

Completely horrified from the verdict, Nell moaned, groaned, sobbed, "I have done nothing; is there a god?" then crashed to the floor in a faint.



Duncan with a face cut out of a magazine.

Although she promised to stop conducting séances upon her release, the spiritualist community's faith remained strong and she was arrested later in 1956 during another séance. However, this time she was released when no evidence of fraud was discovered. She died later that year, and some time after that her husband admitted to seeing his wife swallow items before her séances, while Duncan's personal maid also maintained that she had purchased multiple lengths of cheesecloth for her mistress.

The mystery of the HMS Barham was finally solved when a leak was identified in the form of the secretary to the First Lord uttering details to the Ministry of Economic Warfare.

Nell's conviction contributed greatly to the repeal of the Witchcraft Act of 1735 in 1951, which was replaced by the Fraudulent Medium's Act. Although

to many Hellish Nell is now the poster woman for fake mediums, taking advantage of others pain for financial gain, to her followers Nell was a martyr of the movement. Even today her devotees and ancestors campaign to clear her name of the conviction that has branded her 'Britain's last witch'.

Sources:

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Is Victoria's Secret Secretly A Satanic Cult Pushing Dark Influence On America? | Break.com

break.com

Is Victoria's Secret Secretly A Satanic Cult Pushing Dark Influence On America?

by PhilHaney on Yesterday

Up until recently the iconic Victoria's Secret catalogue has been infiltrating the bedrooms of young men and women across America for decades. I always thought that this sexy catalogue was just inspiring the ladies to wear skimpy lingerie while tingling the nether regions of young fellas ogling their mom's mail. Yet a new conspiracy theory has emerged that suggests Victoria's Secret is actually promoting the work of demons from the netherworld.



Angel or devil?

The theory making the rounds proposes that the Victoria's Secret Angels, the team of models that appear in TV advertisements, walk the runway at fashion shows and tour the world in their bra and panties, are really part of a Satanic Cult hell bent on promoting Satanism through covert and subliminal means. If you thought being forced to wait for your lady to try on some bras at the mall's Victoria's Secret was *hell on earth*, turns out you might be right!



This guy is in boyfriend Purgatory and has no idea.

If the conspiracy theory is true this means household names like Tyra Banks and Heidi Klum have served the Dark Lord in order to bring about the End Times Apocalypse. Need further proof? Just look at all the biblical and demonic imagery that goes into some of the getup (or lack thereof) that these women wear. Those "angel wings" are really meant to evoke demons like Baphomet, who in many depictions has female breasts... just like Victoria's Secret models.

The real Victoria's Secret model?

Baphomet was a deity originally worshiped by the Knights Templar and later used in the Witches Sabbath, a group of women accused of practicing witchcraft in the Middle Ages.



An even more striking image is how closely Victoria Secret models recreate medieval depictions of hell. Some say this is giving fellow Satanists the message that the Antichrist is close to returning – and to BE PREPAIRED.



Still would.

Some guys scour the Victoria's Secret catalogue in search of a rogue nip slip that made it to print. Conspiracy theorists comb through these sticky pages in search of hidden biblical imagery and messages. They say this is how the Victoria Secret Satanists communicate to one another and covertly prepare the populous for the arrival of the Antichrist. Looking at Victoria's Secret models is like receiving a dose of chemtrails for the soul.



Have these dark angels have been sent to swoop up America's youth in a frenzy?



While many in the media have criticized the fashion industry for promoting "unrealistic female body types," there may be an even more sinister motive afoot. These "angels" – who should really be called demons, are purposely becoming too thin in order to expose their ribs, another biblical sign. According to the book of Genesis Eve and thus all women were created from Adam's rib.

We are on to you.

The theory goes that in a weakened state of hunger, young women who espouse to be like the Victoria Secret Angels will not be strong enough both physically and spiritually to fight off demonic forces attempting to overpower them. This way the Satanists will be



able to exude their will over the rest of humanity, one young woman at a time.

It's not just the Angels. Just look at some of the imagery in recent advertising most notably the popular "Pink" campaign. For many colorblind folks the color pink is a hue that comes out "red"- the traditional color of Lucifer and hell. And by selling panties and garments branded with the label "PINK" the alleged Victoria's Secret cabal is stamping the sign of the beast on millions of unwitting American consumers.



Another interesting fact Satan's Panties Truthers connect is that the undergarment brand was founded in the late 1970's in San Francisco, a city known for its New Age hippie movements and ties to the occult. In fact long before he and his followers "drank the Kool-Aid" Jim Jones and The Peoples Temple were headquartered in, you guessed it: San Francisco.



Others have pointed out the benefits of associating with the Victoria's Secret Angels. In fact Leonardo DiCaprio went from a lowly child actor to an Oscar winning leading man after he began dating upwards of NINE different Victoria's Secret models. Interestingly enough his former *Growing Pains* costar Kirk Cameron later went on to be a devout Christian evangelist fighting against such sin. Maybe Cameron knows what is really going on with DiCaprio?

How could this happen otherwise?

So this brings up the question: what exactly IS Victoria's Secret? Are they trying to keep the truth from us about a plot to ready America for the return of the Antichrist and The New World Order? This brings us to the Break Poll!



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World's largest Viking ship headed to Duluth needs to pay $400K, or turn around

startribune.com

The Norwegian tall ship was hit with a $400K fee to sail the Great Lakes.

By Tim Harlow Star Tribune
July 12, 2016 — 10:15pm



The Draken Harald Hårfagre sailed across the Atlantic and was to visit ports along the Great Lakes, ending in Duluth as part of its tall ships festival.

Red tape, bureaucracy and an unexpected $400,000 bill threaten to doom the Draken Harald Hårfagre's visit to America.

It wasn't the reception that the world's largest Viking ship was expecting after leaving Norway in April to cross the Atlantic and head as far west as Duluth, just in time for Tall Ships Duluth 2016, where it's one of the event's marquee attractions.

Without $400,000 to pay for a pilot to guide it through the Great Lakes, the Draken will head home to Norway and miss a series of cities eagerly awaiting its visit through the Great Lakes.

With no money left in its budget, the ship's captain, Björn Ahlander, said in a news release that turning around would be "a great disappointment for us and more importantly to the people we already committed to; it is a pity if we cannot pursue this expedition."

The news has officials in Duluth, Green Bay and Chicago scrambling to ensure the Draken is able to make its final ports of call. Meanwhile, outraged supporters have started an online petition at Change.org calling for the fees and pilot requirement to be waived. The petition had nearly 7,500 electronic signatures by Tuesday evening.

Tall Ships Duluth executive producer Craig Samborski called the developments disappointing, but said efforts are underway to ensure the Draken arrives in Duluth. They include lobbying the U.S. Coast Guard to grant a waiver and finding more money in the budgets to help cover the cost.

"We are working hard to find a resolution to this," Samborski said. "There are heroic efforts to save the day, and I believe the Draken will be here in Duluth."

Calling the Draken "one of the stars of the show with an amazing history to be told," Samborski said its scheduled appearance has helped drive ticket sales. While he declined to say how many tickets have been sold, "we are about double of 2013," he said. The goal for 2016 is 300,000.

Ticket prices range from $9 for a one-day pass to $150 that includes a sailing experience onboard one of the tall ships and access to all festival events.

Officials in Duluth were able to secure the appearance of the Viking ship, which was built to re-create the transatlantic crossing made by explorer Leif Eriksson more than a thousand years ago.

For now, the ship will be docked in Bay City, Mich., through Sunday.

The hangup may be largely due to a communication problem, said Robert Lemire, CEO of the Great Lakes Pilotage Authority (GLPA), a Canadian government agency that oversees the country's waters.

The Draken set sail in April and was under the impression that it would not need a pilot to sail the Great Lakes because it was less than 35 meters long. The Draken is 34.5 meters (115 feet). However, that ruling applied only to its passage through Canadian waters. Once the ship left Snell Lock west of Montreal, it entered international waters, which are under jurisdiction of the U.S. Coast Guard, which requires pilots. That is when

the Draken was informed it had to have a pilot, which can cost up to $400 per hour.

A call to the U.S. Coast Guard seeking comment was not returned.

The fees block "the opportunity for any foreign tall ship to enter the Great Lakes and visit the ports," said Sigurd Aase, owner and curator of the Draken, in a news release. "We are a nonprofit project with the intention to spread knowledge about the Vikings' seafaring and to inspire people to pursue dreams and look beyond the horizon, as modern Vikings. The fees are just not possible for a project like Draken Harald Hårfagre to pay."

While the release pointed the finger at the GLPA, Lemire said his agency has no say in the matter. "Our government in Ottawa is not happy. We try to help these people."

Regardless of who is to blame, petition supporters are asking both the GLPA and the U.S. Coast Guard to "rescind this unjustified requirement to allow the Draken Harald Hårfagre the same latitude that other noncommercial tall ships enjoy and to continue on the port visits for which dozens of Great Lakes communities have publicized, planned and sold admission and entry tickets."

The ship is named after Harald Fairhair, the king who unified Norway into one kingdom. Construction on the ship began in 2010. Built with techniques from archaeological findings, using old boatbuilding traditions and the legends of Viking ships from the Norse saga, the Draken Harald Hårfagre is believed to be the largest Viking ship built in modern times, according to the ship's website.

The Draken features an oak hull and a 3,200-square-foot sail. It carries a crew of 32 men and women under the command of Ahlander.

In Duluth, the Draken was to have been one of several tall ships from around the world on display, along with the World's Largest Rubber Duck. The festival, dubbed "The Greatest Spectacle on Lake Superior," runs Aug. 18-21.

Besides making an appearance at Tall Ships Duluth, the Draken Harald Hårfagre was scheduled to stop in Quebec City and Toronto; Bay City, Mich., Chicago, Green Bay, New York City and ports in Ohio and Connecticut.

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THE WARMINSTER THING: Has UK's biggest mass UFO sighting case finally been solved?

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THE WARMINSTER THING: Has UK's biggest mass UFO sighting case finally been solved?

IT HAS perplexed the nation for more than 50 years, but the mysterious case of the Warminster Thing may have finally been solved.

By Jon Austin Jon Austin
PUBLISHED: 19:33, Thu, Aug 4, 2016 | UPDATED: 20:00, Thu, Aug 4, 2016



YouTube*JONAUSTIN

Has information in an MoD report in the National Archives solved the Warminster UFO mystery?

The Wiltshire town was plagued by a series of mystery UFO sightings, that often resulted in people's cars temporally braking down, from the 1960s

The Warminster case is one of the strangest cases of mass paranormal sightings cases registered in the UK.

Although strange phenomena were recorded in the area prior to 1965, it was in that year that the frequency of reports of mystery noises and sightings intensified.

On August 17, 1965, a "detonation noise" rocked houses on the town's Boreham Field housing estate before a "monstrous orange flame was seen in the sky, crackling and hissing".

The phenomena then became known as the 'Warminster Thing' after scores of townspeople reported in late 1965 seeing an array of inexplicable sights in the sky, accompanies by noises and odd occurrences, that a led to a public meeting being held in the town hall.

It was hoped the meeting would lead to answers from authorities about what was happening in the local area, but no explanation was forthcoming and the case remained unresolved even at a 50th anniversary conference last August.

But a UK MoD investigation into flying saucer sightings in general may have inadvertently solved what was going on in Warminster all those years ago, Express.co.uk can reveal.

During the Warminster sightings many motorists in the area had reported their cars failing after seeing orbs of light or spheres or hearing strange noises, and having a vivid experience.

> Plasmas could impact on the witnesses' brain to cause effects such as vivid but mainly incorrect recollections of events as well as extended memory retention and repeat experiences.
>
> MoD report

These included:

*August 20 1965: A couple on a motorcycle felt it stall as two white spheres of light hovered overhead, changing colour






YouTube

*Oct 8, 1965, 12.25am; A woman driving towards Warminster felt her car lose power after seeing a bright orange ball before the vehicle stopped. She then saw a dark object rise from a nearby field, sparking red and blue, before the engine started up again.

*September 7 1965, 8pm: Major William Hill's car cut out and was "shaken by air vibrations". He got out and heard a whining, crackling noise.

*Approx. 1967: A businessman driving past Clay Hill felt his car become hot and heard a high-pitched noise before the engine failed. He got out and saw a glowing white disc overhead before it sped off.

*August 25 1975: A serviceman driving near Warminster reported to a police patrol that his car malfunctioned after seeing a bright-red light in the sky

Although the MoD report, carried out in the 1990s but not make public untiul 2006, was looking at UFO sightings generally, it addressed claims of them affecting people's vehicles.

And buried in the report, available to view at the National Archives, is detail that sheds light on events at Warminster.

Investigators concluded that meteors not fully burning up in Earth's atmosphere could trigger all the events people experienced in warminster, including seeing strange lights, cars failing, and psychological effects.

The report described them as "buoyant plasmas" formed from meteors not fully burning up during entry to the atmosphere.

They are visible to either the naked eye or radar or both.

The report said the plasma objects, when in loose formation, could generate a physical field "from which the reflection of light does not occur" meaning they appear as "black craft, often triangular and up to hundreds of feet in length".

Bizarrely, the report said the presence of these plasmas could even cause malfunction in vehicle engines and radios, as experienced at Warminster, when in "close proximity".

It added they could even impact on the witnesses' brain to cause effects psychological such as "vivid but mainly incorrect" recollections of events as well as "extended memory retention and repeat experiences".

These were other experiences reported by some Warminster witnesses.

The report added that the reasons for the formation, movement, separation and general activity of buoyant charged masses was not completely understood, but an "increase in atmospheric dust and emissions can contribute to the formation of dusty plasmas and may have been responsible for an increase in sightings."

Alien conspiracy theorists are not convinced the report explains al the experiences reported at warminster and that MoD officials clouded the subject to try to explain away a major paranormal event that still cannot be explained.

4 Comments
(edited)4 hours ago
RockNrollRefUg
Though they are not caused by meteors, the plasma thing is probably spot on ... Go read THE SUPER NATURAL by Whitley Strieber and Jeffrey J. Kripal it very much deals with this phenomena ... the plasma soul

.... also Jaques Vallee talks very much about this, particularly in Demensions, lastly go read the Condon Report ... https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Condon_Committee ... you will realize that these plasma things are even crazier and weirder and far stranger than any extraterrestrial hypothesis, and is all right here in front of our very eyes... they are stating it explicitly but we are so blind by our current cultural narratives, our historical stories, and our own personal trances that we do not notice the crazy things all around us.
(edited)7 hours ago

Britishsubject

I'm not ufo-ist but I very much doubt that meteors make such a habit of targeting Warminster.
(edited)9 hours ago

UK4Ever

Clever stuff that plasma eh? can we harness it and leave it in westminster instead of Warminster?
(edited)9 hours ago

JBJB

Cars BRAKING down !!!! God the standards in this paper get worse

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Wells Fargo Said to Face U.S. Probe Over Soldiers' Car Seizures

2016-07-28T09:00:00.003Z

bloomberg.com

July 28, 2016 — 2:00 AM PDT

- DOJ reviewing company's compliance with military lending law
- Bank's vehicle repossessions also under regulatory scrutiny

Wells Fargo & Co. is facing a U.S. investigation into whether it improperly repossessed cars owned by members of the military, according to two people with knowledge of the probe.

In their review, the Justice Department and bank regulators are examining Wells Fargo's compliance with the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, which in most cases requires that firms obtain a court order before seizing vehicles from soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines. The government and Wells Fargo have begun discussing how to compensate borrowers who might have been affected, said one of the people, who asked not to be named because the investigation isn't public.

Shielding soldiers from financial stress has been a priority for lawmakers, and the Justice Department has recently stepped up enforcement actions against banks for taking assets illegally. Banco Santander SA's U.S. unit agreed to pay $9 million last year over allegations that it improperly confiscated 1,112 vehicles from military members, the largest settlement ever obtained in a case involving repossessions of automobiles with delinquent loans.

Catherine Pulley, a spokeswoman for Wells Fargo, declined to comment. Spokesmen for the Justice Department and the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, which regulates Wells Fargo's banking unit, also declined to comment.

Outside Contractors

Lenders often hire contractors to resolve issues with unpaid loans, including taking back property from those who fail to meet their obligations. It couldn't be determined whether Wells Fargo used a third-party in the cases the government is reviewing, how the bank's actions might have violated the law or how many vehicles could be involved.

In a May regulatory filing, San Francisco-based Wells Fargo said it had $61 billion in outstanding auto loans, with $55 million of those at least 90 days past due.

Wells Fargo -- the world's most valuable bank -- has branches on eight U.S. military bases, include Fort Bliss in Texas, Georgia's Fort Benning, Fort Dix in New Jersey and Hill Air Force Base in Utah. On its website, the bank says it has "a history of making banking easier for our servicemen and servicewomen."

The bank has previously been accused of not adhering to the military lending law, which Congress approved decades ago to protect soldiers from legal hassles while they're on active duty.

Mortgage Settlement

It was one of five of the nation's biggest mortgage servicers that agreed to pay $123 million to military members for improper home foreclosures following the 2008 financial crisis. Wells Fargo's share was $28 million to be paid to 239 borrowers, according to a statement issued by the Justice

Department last year. It didn't admit or deny the allegations.

In the Santander case, the Justice Department first learned that vehicles might have been repossessed illegally through a referral from the U.S. Army's legal assistance program. The referral involved allegations that the bank took a soldier's car in the middle of the night after being told that he was at basic training. Santander didn't admit or deny the department's claims.

Capital One Financial Corp. agreed to pay $12 million in 2012 over a wider range of allegations that also included improper vehicle seizures. The bank acknowledged that it might not have been in compliance with the law.

A frequent problem in investigations involving asset repossessions is that lenders lack awareness of a borrower's eligibility for protections. While the Department of Defense maintains a database accessible to banks, recent studies by the U.S. Government Accountability Office found that loan servicers often didn't check military status. Thousands of people haven't received proper benefits under the law and oversight by regulators "has been limited," the GAO has said.

Widespread Violations

John Odom Jr., a retired Air Force judge advocate whose Shreveport, Louisiana-based law practice has focused on such cases, said it's difficult to track how widespread violations of the servicemembers act might be, because it affects a large population that's often on the move.

"I think the chances are very, very high that there are a lot of them out there," Odom said.

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Suspect Wearing a Wolf Mask Robs Suburban Bank at Gunpoint

Published at 3:45 PM CDT on Jul 24, 2016

nbcchicago.com

The robbery occurred at a Fifth Third Bank branch in far west suburban DeKalb, according to the FBI





FBI

A suspect wearing a wolf mask robbed a Fifth Third Bank branch at gunpoint Friday afternoon in far west suburban DeKalb.

At 4:11 p.m., the robber showed a handgun during the robbery at the branch at 2707 Sycamore Rd., according to the FBI.

He is described as a black male, standing between 6-feet- and 6-feet-2, with a medium build, the FBI said. The suspect was wearing a wolf mask, a red hat, light-colored pants and a dark blue long sleeve shirt.

Anyone with information on the robbery is asked to contact the FBI at (312) 421-6700.

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Copyright SunTimes

What the story of the niqab-wearing Welsh speaker tells us about what we want to hear

By Sarah Ditum

newstatesman.com



New Statesman

You know this story because you've seen it on Facebook. Maybe you're one of the 20,000-some people to have shared it. Or if it missed your wall, you saw it today in the *Metro* or the *Times* or the Welsh local press. It's an irresistible one, seen through the eyes of a man on the replacement rail service between Newport and Cwmbran, though he doesn't participate – he's not the hero here, just the storyteller.

There's a woman in a niqab, talking to her son in a non-English language. On the seat in front of them: a white man, who turns around and tells the woman that she's in the UK and should be speaking English. On the seat in front of the white man, an elderly white woman who now says to him: "She's in Wales. And she's speaking Welsh." How delicious. And how unlikely, if you care about things like that.

If the story sounds familiar, that might be because you've heard it before, in a slightly different variant. "Racist gets public linguistic comeuppance" is a trope that's been circulating for years: here's one version set in America from 2013, where the woman is accused of speaking "Mexican" but is actually speaking Navajo. She's also on the phone rather than speaking to her son, and it's the woman rather than a third party who delivers the killer blow: but give or take a few details, the archetype is still the same.

News reporters have spoken to the original Facebook poster, but not to any of the participants in the scene. Maybe they will show up in time. Until they do, all we have is a story – and an unlikely one. We know there are very few niqab wearers in England and Wales: extrapolating from a French survey, there are likely to be just 1,000 women who wear either the burqa or niqab. And you're more likely to find them in England than Wales, where just 1.5 per cent of the population is Muslim (in London, it's 12.4 per cent). Then there's the language: the south east of Wales, where this story is set, has one of the lowest densities of Welsh speakers in the whole region.

That doesn't make this parable of British chauvinism vanquished by multiethnic Wales (perfectly integrated in language if not in dress) untrue, but without corroboration, it's more appealing than plausible. And, unless you saw it happen, there's absolutely no reason to believe it's true – except for a desire to believe that *things like this can happen*. In this story, there are good people and bad people, and the good outnumber and triumph over the bad. The truth is revealed, and the belligerent racist is silenced.

In reality, immigration is an issue where anxiety and actuality only infrequently collide. Polling agency Ipsos MORI found that the number of immigrants coming into Britain is the top issue for EU referendum voters; in research published four days later, just one in five respondents said they had been personally adversely affected by immigration. This mismatch between information and emotion is dismaying, but why should liberals be perplexed by it when the proliferation of the racist bus story

shows that credulousness is equally possible on either side of the issue?

Confirmation bias is always a powerful thing. We're always hungry for scraps that can support our own narratives and reinforce our belief that we are right – and always willing to suspend critical faculties when a story fits our own prejudices. That goes for people whose prejudices tell them that a woman wearing a niqab on the Newport to Cwmbran rail replacement service is a dangerous alien who need to be taught a lesson, and it's true also for those whose prejudices tell them that this same woman must be an assiduously integrated parts of British life.

But neither side needs the woman in a niqab on the Newport to Cwmbran rail replacement service to be real. In fact, it's more convenient all round if she doesn't exist, because so long as she can't pop up with any awkward human complications, she can be the screen where we project our own self-image. A length of black fabric on which to publish the statement of own politics. A totem of all the ways that we, the onlookers in this story, are unlike the stupid racist who can't tell Arabic from Welsh.

Self-congratulatory sermonising helps no one, and certainly does nothing to address the grievances that leave voters are nursing, which can be both misdirected and real. When the result of the EU referendum is known on Friday, neither Leave nor Remain will be enough to settle the proxy was about immigration that this campaign has become. The certainty that our political opponents are idiotic and immoral is a comforting one, but it's poisonous too. People can believe wrong things without always being wicked – fortunately for you, if you shared an unsubstantiated story of a racist getting schooled on public transport.

Sarah Ditum is a journalist who writes regularly for the *Guardian*, *New Statesman* and others. Her website is here.

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When you want to be rid of your shadow

18/07/2016 news.com.au

When twins try to murder each other

July 18, 20169:02am



Alexandria Duval, left, was driving the car that killed her identical twin Anastasia.

WITNESSES in Maui saw a strange thing on the Hana Highway last month.

Identical twin sisters Anastasia and Alexandria Duval ("yoga entrepreneurs" from Florida), were seen arguing in a car pulled over by the side of the road.

Things escalated and Anastasia was seen pulling Alexandria's hair and screaming.

Then witnesses saw the vehicle "accelerate forward and then take a sharp left over the cliff" and plunge 60m onto rocks.

The passenger, Anastasia, was pronounced dead at the scene.

The driver, Alexandria was taken to hospital in a critical condition. The 37-year-old has now appeared in court, charged with the second-degree murder of her sister. Prosecutors allege she intentionally drove the car off the cliff and made no attempt to stop.

This story is particularly shocking as we're often told the bond between twins is "unbreakable". Sometimes this bond takes on an almost magical quality, with stories of twin telepathy.

"Twins have many more similar experiences than your average siblings," explains Dr Avidan Milevsky, a psychologist and author of *Sibling Issues in Therapy*. "The similarities between them often create a certain bond that is unrepeatable in other sibling dynamics."



Perth identical twins Anna and Lucy DeCinque have copped backlash after

*Source:*Supplied

That is why it's so intriguing and horrifying when one tries to murder the other.

The tale of Alexandria and Anastasia is the latest twin murder to make headlines. But there have been a number over the years.

In 1998, San Diego student Gina Han masterminded a plot against

appearing on one of the UK's most popular talk shows this week. Courtesy: ITV UK.



Twins in pop culture, such as Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen, tend to give the impression that twins are almost inseparable.

her identical twin sister Sunny. The twins, who were co-valedictorians of their high school class had become estranged in recent years (Gina was convinced that Sunny had some of her belongings and wouldn't return them). Gina and two friends hatched a plan to kill Sunny, but it was botched when police burst into the apartment to rescue Sunny and her flatmate (they were found bound and gagged). Gina, who was branded the "evil twin" in the press was sentenced to 26 years to life. She sobbed uncontrollably in the dock as she was sentenced.

*Source:*AP



Sunny Han is supported by police as she makes her way to the witness stand to testify in her twin sister's trial.

In 2014 Robert Cerqua from the UK, was found guilty of stabbing his identical twin brother Christopher to death on New Year's Eve. A fight broke out after the 31-year-olds began arguing about their past. After stabbing Christopher in the torso with a kitchen knife Robert left the house barefoot and joined his girlfriend at a nearby party until 2.20am when he was arrested. He passed out drunk in the police car.

*Source:*Supplied



Robert and Christopher Cerqua.

(A brief overview of the history of twin killings suggests that non-identical or fraternal twin murders seem to occur less than those committed by identical twins, but this may be because these less sensationalised cases tend not to make the headlines).

Dr Milevsky attributes wanting to murder your twin to a host of factors.

First, there is the element of sibling rivalry. Research studies indicate that up to 45 per cent of adults have a rivalrous or distant relationship with a sibling.

"Classic sibling dynamics may be a small element within this disturbing phenomenon but at the

core, actually killing a sibling is driven by the killer possessing severe psychopathology and psychosis," he says.

"Add to this severe psychopathology, the competition that is often found in twin relationships, and you may then find a case of twin killing."

You might assume that having this twin bond would add to their sense of grief. However, this isn't always the case:

When Robert Cerqua woke up drunk in the back of the police car after killing Christopher he said: "Is he dead? You are lying, he cannot be".

While being taken to his cell, he added: "Was it me? Was it me? I cannot remember. Honestly, is my brother dead?"

When he was told the charge against him the next day in his cell, he allegedly said: "I killed my f****** brother. I don't want to be here any more.

"Nine times out of 10 it would be all right. [That's] just my luck, he had to die on me."

Twin loss expert and author of *When Grief Calls Forth the Healing* Mary R. Morgan says that guilt often follows relief.

"Relief can also surface at the end of a complex relationship, especially when there is a conflicted 'personal identity versus twin bond' issue."



Twins June and Jennifer Gibbons (with biographer Marjorie Wallace). When Jennifer died, June's only words on the subject were, "I'm free at last, liberated, and at last Jennifer has given up her life for me."

*Source:*Supplied

So could murdering a twin be seen as an act of liberation?

"Some twin pairs — not all — become disillusioned about their twinship because they struggle to be 'known,' not just 'noticed,'" twin expert and *The Same but Different* author Dr Joan A. Friedman explains.

Indeed, some people refer to twins as "two halves of a whole," a tag that can frustrate twins struggling to define their own identity.

"Since outsiders relate to them as a unit, they expectedly have conflicts with their twin in an attempt to define their individual selves. Rivalry in adult twins has everything to do with wanting to be on one's own and discovering one's sense of self without worrying how this will disrupt and upset one's twin," Friedman says.

She says that most twin pairs eventually find ways to define their identity, but some twins aren't so lucky.

Take the case of Welsh twins June and Jennifer Gibbons, dubbed the "Silent Twins" due to their secret twin language and selective mutism. After a crime spree of arson and theft, the then 18 year olds were sent to Broadmoor, the UK's highest security psychiatric hospital, where they both became convinced that in order to experience true freedom, one had to die.



June and Jennifer Gibbons.

*Source:*YouTube

Entries in June's diary give some idea of how their twin bond trapped them, rather than strengthening them.

"Nobody suffers the way I do ... This sister of mine, a dark shadow robbing me of sunlight, is my one and only torment," she wrote.

Jennifer agreed, writing in her own diary: "We have become fatal enemies in each other's eyes," but she questioned if she could ever live without her twin:

"Can I get rid of my own shadow? Without my shadow, would I gain life, be free or left to die?"

One day, they told their only friend journalist Marjorie Wallace (author of their biography), that one of them wouldn't make it out of the hospital alive.

Jennifer looked at Wallace and said, "I'm going to die. We've decided."

Eleven years on, just hours after the twins were released from Boardmoor (they were being moved to a facility closer to Wales), Jennifer, at the age of 29, died on her sister's shoulder from a sudden inflammation of the heart muscle.

The cause remains a mystery.

- *With Layla Haidrani at Vice*

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Last Updated Thursday, July 14, 2016 1:48PM EDT ctvnews.ca

Who is the masked bride? Mystery woman seen leaving notes around Toronto



Bride

A woman dressed in a wedding gown and wearing a white mask has been spotted around the city in recent weeks, according to Facebook users who are trying to figure out the mystery. (Source: Julian Bustos/Facebook)

Is it a summertime performance art project? A marketing ploy?

A group of Torontonians want to know: Who is the masked bride?

A woman dressed in a wedding gown and wearing a white mask has been spotted around the city in recent weeks, according to Facebook users who are trying to figure out the mystery.

Last week, a Facebook user posted a photo of the masked figure, sitting in a park with a piece of black luggage by her side. The woman, according to the Facebook user's description, appeared to be writing notes and then discarding them at her feet.

"So I've been seeing this masked bride around the city … she has been writing and then leaving strange notes (or diary entries). Anyone else seen her or know what this is about?" he wrote.

The Facebook user also provided a closeup shot of one of the notes, which is dated June 30, 2016 and addressed to "whom it may concern." The profanity-laden note, written in cursive, makes mention of singer-songwriter Nick Cave, and is partially written in French.

The post prompted a wave of comments, including others who say they too, have spotted the bride about town.

Some shrugged it off as a ploy, suggesting it was a "brilliant" way to market a play or street performance.

"Very likely some sort of art project," wrote one Facebook user. "There's always a million of them in Toronto all over .. it's just a matter of who notices they're there."

Others suggested it was live action role-playing, commonly known as LARPing.

Regardless, many were just happy to play along.

"Love our city for this kind of stuff," wrote one commenter.

"Still waiting for some real hard facts on this phenomenon," wrote another.

One commenter wondered if more than one person is dressing up in the white gown.

Another user was both fascinated and afraid of the mystery bride.

“I’m scared. I’m reading this half asleep at 5 am,” he wrote. “I’m gonna have nightmares.”

One environmentally minded Facebook user was not happy with the bride’s actions.

“Not real impressed with her littering!!!! Sheesh!!”

Another sighting of the masked bride on July 14 placed her on a Starbucks patio in downtown Toronto.

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Who keeps stealing mannequins in Belleville, Ont.?

ottawasun.com

Ottawa Sun

First posted: Wednesday, July 27, 2016 09:37 PM EDT | Updated: Wednesday, July 27, 2016 09:41 PM EDT



Mannequin

BELLEVILLE, Ont. - The theft of several female mannequins from stores in a small Ontario town have local police scratching their heads.

In the past three months the Belleville Police Service has investigated five break and enters and one attempted break and entered involving female mannequins.

On May 8 and June 23, a business on Front Street was broken into and on both occasions two female mannequins were taken.

Another mannequin theft was reported on May 13, while the latest thefts occurred on July 14 and July 24, where four female mannequin torsos were removed from the same store.

Police have not provided a description of the suspect, however '80s film star Andrew McCarthy has made it clear he's not behind the bizarre crimes.

Back in June, the actor best known as Blane in Pretty in Pink, but also as Jonathan Switcher from the 1987 romantic comedy Mannequin, tweeted a hilarious response to a police report on the mannequin thefts from the Belleville Intelligencer.

POSTMEDIA

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California wildfire displaces exotic animals, horses, cats and dogs, too

July 27, 2016 yahoo.com



A fire fighter battles the so-called Sand Fire in the Angeles National Forest near Los Angeles, California, United States, July 25, 2016. REUTERS/Gene Blevins

By Alex Dobuzinskis

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) - A virtual Noah's Ark of wild beasts and livestock has been relocated to save them from a massive wildfire burning north of Los Angeles in a region that is home to exotic animal sanctuaries and horse ranches.

Officials and volunteers at the Wildlife Waystation in the northern Los Angeles suburb of Sylmar moved about three-quarters of the sprawling facility's 400 animals on Saturday, including dozens of large animals such as tigers, lions, bears and cougars, founder Martine Colette said in a telephone interview.

The animals were coaxed into cages by voice command and meat for bait, and then loaded onto trucks, vans and trailers, Colette said.

The so-called Sand Fire has charred 59 square miles (153 sq km) since it broke out on Friday in a mostly rural area around the community of Acton on the northwestern fringes of the Angeles National Forest.

Wildlife Waystation said it expects to return the animals to the Sylmar facility on Wednesday, since firefighters have made progress containing the blaze.

The creatures great and small, which were taken to other wild animal sanctuaries in Southern California, have been stressed by the move, Colette said. "They absolutely hate it, and it will take them several days, maybe as long as a week, to settle down when they finally come home."

Most of the animals evacuated from the facility are small, including birds and lizards, that could easily be harmed by smoke, she said.

The fire also forced ranch and farm owners in the region to evacuate their livestock by trailer to a number of facilities. More than 300 horses, 165 goats, 33 pigs and two Brahman bulls were displaced by the fire, according to the Los Angeles County Department of Animal Care and Control.

About 10 miles (16 km) north of the Wildlife Waystation, officials at the Lange Foundation's St. Bonnie's Sanctuary in Canyon Country on Saturday evacuated more than 40 dogs, over 60 cats and 14 horses, a board member with the organization, Diane Nelson, said in a telephone interview.

Most of them were taken by car and van to one of the foundation's centers in Los Angeles. The foundation saves animals from being euthanized at shelters.

Officials from two animal sanctuaries in the northern Los Angeles County region, the Gibbon Conservation Center that is home to arboreal apes, and the Shambala Preserve for big cats, said they were able to avoid moving their animals.

(Reporting by Alex Dobuzinskis; Editing by Toni Reinhold)

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Winnie the Pooh cloud appears over children's charity event in Dorset metro.co.uk

Richard Hartley-Parkinson for Metro.co.ukThursday 28 Jul 2016 7:24 am



The cloud that appeared over Dorset (Picture: Xposure)

We get it, it's just a cloud, but we do actually think this one looks like something.

Winnie the Pooh!

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Back to top

Winnie the Pooh cloud appears over children's charity event in Dorset

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'Creepy' clown carrying black balloons is spotted in Wisconsin

15:23 EST, 2 August 2016 |

dailymail.co.uk

Daily Mail .com

MailOnline US - news, sport, celebrity, science and health stories

- **First sighting of the eerie clown figure took place at 2am on August 1**
- **Photos of the mystery prankster depict a person in ghoulish circus makeup and a tattered clown jumpsuit**
- **Facebook fan page dedicated to the clown, nicknamed 'Gags,' has drawn more than 700 'likes'**
- **There have been multiple sightings of so-called 'evil clowns' around the US dating back to at least 2014**

By Snejana Farberov For Dailymail.com

People living in Green Bay, Wisconsin, have been reporting sightings of an unsettling-looking clown walking around town at night brandishing black balloons.

A Facebook fan page has sprung up paying tribute the bizarre figure, who has been dubbed 'Gags' the Green Bay Clown. It has drawn more than 700 likes as of Tuesday afternoon.

According to one post, the first sighting of the eerie entertainer took place on August 1 at 2am, as the local station WBAY first reported.



Stuff of nightmares: People living in Green Bay, Wisconsin, have been reporting sightings of this unsettling-looking clown



Eerie entertainer: According to a Facebook post, the first sighting of the bizarre figure took place on August 1 at 2am

Photos shared on the social media account depict a figure straight out of horror films – and many people's nightmares - dressed in a ragged jumpsuit, over-sized clown shoes and a dirty ruff collar around the neck.

The person in the joker costume wears ghostly black and white makeup and carries several black balloons in his or her hand.

According to one commenter, the clown prank was the handiwork of a director working on a short horror film, but it has not been confirmed.

There have been multiple sightings of equally unnerving clowns around the country in recent years, including in California, Indiana, and New York City.

There have also been sightings in England, France, and Australia.

As recently as last November, students at Carroll University in Waukesha, Wisconsin, reported seeing a strange clown in an orange outfit on campus.

Local police later identified the person behind the disturbing prank as a developmentally delayed teenager who was dressing up and staring at passers-by on Main Street to get a reaction out of people.



Unmasked? One commenter claimed the Green Bay clown prank is the handiwork of a director working on a short horror film

In July of 2015, a person dressed as a clown, complete with a rainbow-colored wig, was caught on camera climbing a fence surrounding a Chicago cemetery and waving at people.

A strange clown figure walking around with balloons in his hands set the town of Fishers, Indiana, on edge in the weeks leading up to Halloween in 2014.

Around the same time, California's San Joaquin Valley emerged as a hotbed of creepy clown activity, with people dressed in menacing circus-inspired outfits roaming the streets in the middle of the night, some of them carrying what appeared to be firearms.

There were also multiple sightings of 'evils clowns' walking around Wasco - a city located between San Francisco and Los Angeles

Across the country, in Staten Island, New York, a demonic-looking clown was spotted in March 2014, lurking behind trees in residential areas and popping up at train stations and banks.

Comments (

Ed Hyde, White Mountains, United States, about 10 hours ago

Even when I was a young boy, I never thought clowns were funny.

tashaveee, london, United Kingdom, about 11 hours ago

Not funny - particularly as America has already had its own REAL killer clown. Look up John Wayne Gacy.

Batman Crime Fighter, Gotham Village Nottingham GB, United Kingdom, about 12 hours ago

HES DEFINITELY A HILLERY CLINTON SUPPORTER! SHES THE CHIEF OF CLOWNS!

notmelol, yorkshire, Sudan, about 13 hours ago

and this is news-worthy because...?

me here, London, about 13 hours ago

He'll get a good smack if he's not careful!

Lynzey, Toronto-Canada, about 14 hours ago

Now that IS creepy.

scigib, Portsmouth, United Kingdom, about 15 hours ago

Someones been reading IT. Shudder Scary Clowns!!!!!!

crafty, London, United Kingdom, about 15 hours ago

A trusted childhood figure like a clown or a doll being possessed by an evil and portraying darkness is a very powerful and emotive image. A tool used in many horror books and films. The clowns above may have been inspired like Steven King was by the Serial killer John Wayne Gacy Jr. He became known as the Killer Clown due to his childrens parties where he would dress as his creation Pogo the Clown. He murdered 33 teenage boys and young men between 1972 and 1978 in Illinois. Crime TV shows film and literature are dominated by serial killers. As a species we seem fascinated by them and they enter into modern folklore and immortality. After all they prove that Monsters really do exist after all.

blowhorn, blue planet, France, about 15 hours ago

Must be Trump showing his true face!

slowburn, Bradford, United Kingdom, about 15 hours ago

Killer clown prank!!! YouTube it!

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-THE WILD HUNT-
MODERN PAGAN NEWS & COMMENTARY

The Wild Hunt

Witch Rings and the Riddles at Mither Kirk

Claire Dixon — July 14, 2016 — 2 Comments

ABERDEEN, Scotland — A recent archaeological dig at a church in Scotland has helped bring the public perception of Witches and the history of their persecution into sharp focus. A team of scientists in Aberdeen uncovered up to 2,000 bodies and a cache of medieval archives showing that the Kirk of St Nicholas Uniting was used in the 1500s as a "Witches' prison."



Mither Kirk [Courtesy Dr. Winfield]

One relic that has gripped the imagination of the public is an iron ring mounted on one of the walls (pictured below). It is believed to be where the accused were kept before going to trial. This, along with the rest of the finds, are a result of a 10-year project at the church, known locally as *Mither Kirk,* which is Scottish dialect for Mother Church. *St Nicholas Uniting* is the name of the Mother Church and Administrative Head Church of the city.

Through this find, on one level, a very vivid image of the persecution of Witches has emerged. The records that were unearthed demonstrate that details of the witch trials were painstakingly recorded by Church officials. Archivist Martin Hall said that those tried for witchcraft were "very frequently accused of healing diseases, usually using unusual methods".

He added: "Janet Lucas (one of those recorded by the archive) is accused of taking threads from people's clothes to heal or enchant them."

In another example, a man called Andrew Mann was accused of "long-standing affairs with the Queen of the Elves" and "stealing a herd of cattle and leading dances through the countryside on All Hallow's Eve".

Those accused of Witchcraft were invariably burned at the stake, and the materials necessary to perform the burning, such as the number of tar barrels and the amount of wood, were painstakingly recorded.

Parts of Mither Kirk date to 1150, and it currently still operates as a Church of Scotland site. The



General view Excavations in Mither Kirk [Courtesy Dr. Winfield]

building's eastern wing, which had not been in use for many years, was given the go ahead for development in 2003. When it was finished, the wing was opened up as a public facility for the people of Aberdeen.

Of the 2,000 bodies discovered during the dig, which began in 2010 in the Eastern zone's old graveyard, only 900 bodies were considered completely or partially buried. The rest had been disturbed in some way, thought to be mostly due to placing new graves on top of existing ones.

A number of bodies were also found interred in the walls of the church itself. However, it is not yet known if any of those bodies are connected to the Witches' prison, and it is also unclear why the story has only been covered by mainstream media now – long after the discoveries were first made.

Sensationalised coverage by the BBC placed a particular emphasis on the Witches' ring. Project leader Dr Arthur Winfield admitted that he did not understand the media attention. He told *The Wild Hunt*: "It is only post-excavation work which is still ongoing, plus finding links to other information sources."

"The [BBC] piece clearly focused on the use of St Mary's Chapel as a prison for Witches in the 1590s," he said. "There is a ring – which is quite insignificant – in the wall to which they were chained."

Dr. Winfield also added, "I was rather sceptical but it seems that the city archives contain the itemised invoice for payment for putting the ring in place."



Witch Ring found at Mither Kirk [Courtesy Dr. Winfield]

Professor Ronald Hutton of Bristol University, who is currently undertaking a major research project on the history of Witchcraft, stressed the fact that, in terms of news, there have been no new discoveries. He said: "The finding of unrelated burials in the church has reminded people of the iron rings in its vaults where accused criminals, including alleged witches, were held awaiting trial and execution. We always knew about these."

Prof Hutton continued: "Aberdeen had an especially vicious mass witch hunt in 1596-7, in which local cunning folk got swept up with socially suspect characters, and convicted on confession, probably after torture."

As Prof Hutton explains, Scotland's record on the treatment of Witches differs sharply from that of neighbouring England. He said, "In Scotland it was very difficult to avoid conviction of Witchcraft, unlike in England where the acquittal rate was 75%, because the people who arrested the person accused were empowered by the government to act as her or his judges.

"The mode of execution was, however, similar, as English victims of Witch trials were hanged and the Scottish were usually strangled. But in England the bodies were then buried and in Scotland they were burnt."

As Prof Hutton and project leader Dr Winfield both highlight, while there is a definite link to the persecution of Witches at the site, the extent and full nature of that link remains unclear at present. The find at Mither Kirk represents a great opportunity to discover more, not only about this fascinating period of history, but also of the history of Witchcraft in Britain.



Remains found in the wall [Courtesy Dr. Winfield]

It is often said that these Witch trials and executions, on one level, served as public entertainment. With that in mind, it would appear that the modern sensationalist spin on the story, as presented in the British press, offers up the victims in that very way. Additionally, the BBC's focus on the more grisly details of such an archaeological find is in keeping with the tradition of mainstream British media sensationalising any news story remotely Pagan.

But Ashley Mortimer, a trustee at the Doreen Valiente Foundation and director at the Centre For Pagan Studies, feels the spotlight that has been shone on Mither Kirk can still be seen as a positive. Mortimer said, "I think it shows the Pagan community not to forget where it came from, that our history informs us and those outside of our community of how we came to be here."

Mortimer continued on to say: "That bloody history records that people who describe themselves as Witches were far fewer in times past and those that didn't describe themselves often found others doing it for them – with dire consequences.



Burials at Mither Kirk [Courtesy Dr. Winfield]

"I think it reminds us that we occupy a place of equality in society now which we should treasure and value carefully, one we should remember was hard won over many, many years by those brave enough to stand up for our rights to do as we will and call ourselves what we will.

"Our ancestors deserve our gratitude and we owe it to our descendants to preserve the history – modern, ancient and in between – so that we may never forget where we came from and how we got to here."

All of the details found in the archives will be put on public display, and the remains that were dug up will be reinterred in a specially built crypt in the church.

The true story of Mither Kirk's Witches is still to be told, but for now we have been reminded of their presence.

For more background on the Witch Trials in Scotland, Professor Ronald Hutton recommends Brian P. Levack's Witch-Hunting in Scotland: Law, Politics and Religion by Brian P. Levack.

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'Witch's cottage' unearthed near Pendle Hill, Lancashire - BBC News bbc.com

BBC

'Witch's cottage' unearthed near Pendle Hill, Lancashire

- 8 December 2011

http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-lancashire-16066680
Media captionNick Ravenscroft visited the derelict house near the mysterious Pendle Hill

Engineers have said they were "stunned" to unearth a 17th Century cottage, complete with a cat skeleton, during a construction project in Lancashire.

The cottage was discovered near Lower Black Moss reservoir in the village of Barley, in the shadow of Pendle Hill.

Archaeologists brought in by United Utilities to survey the area found the building under a grass mound.

Historians are now speculating that the well-preserved cottage could have belonged to one of the Pendle witches.

The building contained a sealed room, with the bones of a cat bricked into the wall.

It is believed the cat was buried alive to protect the cottage's inhabitants from evil spirits.

Carl Sanders, United Utilities' project manager, said: "It's not often you come across a fairytale cottage complete with witch's cat.

"The building is in remarkable condition. You can walk through it and get a real sense that you're peering into the past.

"Pendle Hill has a real aura about it, and it's hard not to be affected by the place.

"Even before we discovered the building, there were lots of jokes from the lads about broomsticks and black cats. The find has really stunned us all."

Simon Entwistle, an expert on the Pendle witches, said: "In terms of significance, it's like discovering Tutankhamen's tomb.

"We are just a few months away from the 400th anniversary of the Pendle witch trials, and here we have an incredibly rare find, right in the heart of witching country. This could well be the famous Malkin Tower - which has been a source of speculation and rumour for centuries.

"Cats feature prominently in folklore about witches. Whoever consigned this cat to such a horrible fate was clearly seeking protection from evil spirits."

United Utilities routinely brings in experts before turning the topsoil in areas believed to have archaeological significance.

Frank Giecco, from NP Archaeology, who unearthed the building, said: "It's like discovering your own little Pompeii. We rarely get the opportunity to work with something so well preserved.

Image caption The engineering project has been put on hold while archaeologists investigate the site

"As soon as we started digging, we found the tops of doors, and knew we were on to something special.

"The building is a microcosm for the rise and fall of this area, from the time of the Pendle witches to the industrial age. There are layers of local history right before your eyes."

The engineering project has been put on hold while the archaeologists complete their investigation of the site.

The building also contains a 19th Century kitchen range, still in its original position.

Many artefacts from the building's latter years, such as Victorian crockery, a tin bath and a bedstead, were discovered around the site.

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Witches and Witchcraft in Aberdeen

aberdeencity.gov.uk

http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/education_learning/local_history/archives/loc_witches.asp

Aberdeen City Council

Who were the witches?



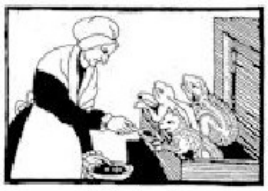
Witches

Witches and healers had existed and been accepted as members of society for centuries. During the later years of the sixteenth century, though, it was commonly believed that these people received their power from the devil. The essence of witchcraft was held to be entering into a pact with the devil, rather than the deeds, good or bad, which could be attributed to a witch. Women were most likely to be accused of witchcraft: eighty percent of cases recorded in Scotland involved women. In Aberdeen and the surrounding areas during 1596 and 1597 two men and 45 women were charged. These women were often the poor, elderly women of a community 'whose poverty, sour temper or singular habits made them an object of dislike or fear to their neighbours'. Such a woman might or might not have a reputation for healing, as well as harming, but above all else she was deemed to have malevolent supernatural powers. Some of the most common misfortunes for which witchcraft was deemed responsible were sudden illness, certain accidents, lingering illness for which no cause was clear, strokes, unexpected deaths, failure of crops (especially if others were doing well), strange behaviour in animals and disasters at sea.

Influence of the Church

Prior to 1563, witchcraft was deemed a crime in ecclesiastical law. The belief that individuals could make a face- to- face pact with the devil, and pay homage to him in nocturnal gatherings, led to theories of diabolical conspiracy, thus providing the intellectual foundation for witch hunts in which the Catholic clergy played a part. After the Reformation, the Protestant ministers and elders of individual parishes were actively involved in the initial interrogation of suspects and, through their role as members of the General Assembly, applied constant pressure on the Government to establish a godly state through seeking out and prosecuting those believed to be in communion with Satan.

Influence of James VI



Witches1

In 1563 the Queen's Act against witchcraft was introduced in Scotland. The Act stated that no person should 'use any manner of witchcraft, sorcery or necromancy, nor give themselves forth to have any such craft or knowledge thereof'.The penalty for being convicted as a witch was death. There followed two main periods of witch persecution in Scotland, the first of which was in the 1590's and the second in the 1640's. The late 16th-century craze was encouraged by the return journey of King James VI and his wife from Denmark when bad weather put the convoy of ships at risk. One of the King's attendant ships was lost and it was widely believed that the high winds were caused by a number of witches assembled at North Berwick Church and in Copenhagen. Many were made following rumours of a conspiracy between the witches of the two countries against the King.

Whilst James VI was in Denmark he was influenced by discussions about witchcraft and witch

hunting which had already begun in that country. His power to influence had a major effect on the number of witch persecutions and in 1596 and 1597 the highest ever figures for persecutions were recorded. His views quickly permeated to the ruling classes and the clergy. James insisted that all witches, all ages, all ranks and even bairns deserved death by fire.

Aberdeen

In Aberdeen, those accused of witchcraft were committed to ward as suspect and guilty of 'witchcraft, sorcery and other diabolical and detestable practices'. The Justice Court, which presided over these trials, consisted of the Provost of Aberdeen, four Baillies and a jury. The trials were held in the Tolbooth.

Dittays - lists of charges against a witch read out before the court - often went back 25 - 30 years and included accusations from neighbours and, occasionally, family members. The 'dittays' were compiled as the first step in bringing witches to trial. At the trials witnesses would testify to seeing or being involved in certain events corresponding to the charges listed. Many of the dittays were written to a common formula and contained dates and times of day when acts of witchcraft supposedly happened. The accusations are nearly all concerned with a curse or casting a spell. As a result of the spell, untoward things happened to those cursed families, homes or animals. There are many fascinating accounts relating to the trials of the women, and the few men, who were both accused and tried for witchcraft and sorcery within the burgh of Aberdeen and the surrounding areas.

16th Century

One of the most interesting cases in Aberdeen happened from 1596 and concerned a whole family. The mother, Jane Wishart, was brought to trial and eventually convicted on 18 points of witchcraft, although the total number of charges brought against her exceeded 30 and covered a period of over 20 years. The charges included casting a spell on a fisherman who then took to his bed and 'lay bedsick for one month'. The earliest charge related to an incident when five men caught her coming out of the yard of Adam Mair, one of her neighbours, at two in the morning. The men woke up Adam's wife to tell her what they had discovered and, later that day at about two or three o'clock in the afternoon, two of the men were found drowned in the Auld Wattergang at the Links where they had gone to wash themselves. Two others who had seen Janet leave her neighbour's house subsequently offered the testimony against her. Janet's son-in-law, John Allan testified against her following an incident when he hit his wife and was chastised by Janet. Following this, a brown dog started to come into his bedroom and attack him, although it left his wife alone. This continued until John threatened to complain to the minister and the Kirk Session. Eight days before Janet was apprehended there was heard a rumbling noise in her house which frightened her next door neighbour who thought his house might fall over. This, too, was attributed to Janet's supernatural powers and formed one of the points of witchcraft on which she was convicted.



Witches2

Janet's son, Thomas Leyis, was found guilty of being a ringleader and convicted on three accounts of witchcraft. He is said to have presided at a meeting held at midnight in the Castlegate when many witches convened at the mercat and fish cross 'under the conduct and guiding of the devil present with them'. These people all danced and played instruments about the crosses and Thomas was accused of being foremost amongst them and of hitting Kathren Mitchell 'because she spoilt the dance and ran not so fast as the rest'. Both Janet and Thomas were strangled and burnt as the, following accounts show.

"

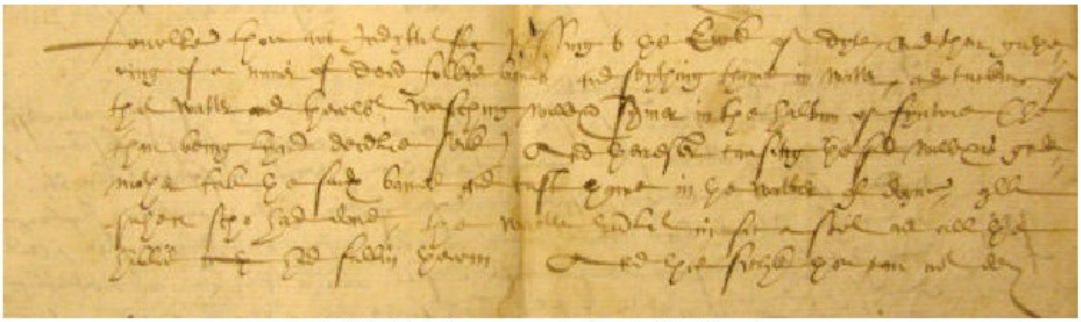
Item, the xxiii. Of Februar, 1596, for peatis, tar barrellis, fir and cillis, to burne the said Thomas [Leyis], and to Jon Justice, for his fie in executing him, 3lib.13s. 4d."

On the 22nd of March the same year John Leyis (Janet's husband) and their three daughters, Elspet, Janet and Violet were also accused of sorcery. They were absolved on all counts of witchcraft but found guilty of being in the company of Janet and Thomas and acting as their accomplices. As a result they were banished from Aberdeen and the surrounding area and were forbidden to come within 10 miles of the burgh. Unfortunately the dittays for each of these trials no longer exist but Aberdeen's City Archives do still have the original dittay for the trial of Isobel Strathauchyn - also known as Isobel Skuddie. She was found guilty of witchcraft and burned in March 1597. The charges against her included making up a love charm and gathering up bones in Dyce churchyard, boiling them in water and then taking the water and washing William Symmer of Hatton of Fintray. Thereafter she caused William's mother to take the bones and throw them in to the River Don, which when she did 'caused the water to rumble in such a manner as [if] all the hills had fallen therein'.

Transcription and Translation of Charge Two in the Dittay Given Against Isobel Strathanchyn, February 1597

Secundlie thou are art Indyttit for cu[m]ming to elspet mutray in vodheid vodes and askng fra hir to len the a pennie, q[ui]lk quhen sche had gevin the, thou tuik the pennie and bowitt it, and than tuik a clout and a piece of reid wax, and sewit the pennie and the wax within the clout, and therefter thow having Inchantit that clout thow gawe it to the said elpset mutray, Bidding hir hing the same about hir craig, and quhen sche saw the man sche luffit best, baid hir thin tak the clout w[it]h the pennie and the wax and straik hir face thereft[er] and she sua doing sult atteane to the mariage of the man quhom sche luffit best, and the s[ai]d elspet understanding that thy said directioun to hir was plane witchcraft and devilrie she keist that clout in the fyre, q[ui]lk had almost birnt all hir hous, and this you can not deny.

Secondly you are indicted for coming to Elspet Mutray in Woodhead woods and asking her to lend you a penny, which when she had given you, you took the penny and bent it, then took a cloth and a piece of red wax and sewed the penny and the red wax inside the cloth, and then having enchanted that cloth you gave it to the said Elspet Mutray bidding her to hang the same about her neck, and when she saw the man she loved best, bade her then take the cloth with the penny and the wax and stroke her face thereafter, and she so doing should attain to the marriage of the man whom she loved the best, and the said Elspet understanding that the said direction to her was plain witchcraft and devilry she cast the cloth in the fire, which had almost burned all her house, and this you can not deny



List of 4th lot of charges against Isobel Strathanchyn

Transcription and Translation of Charge Four

in the Dittay Given Against Isobel Strathanchyn, February 1597



Witches3

Fourlle thou art Indyttit for passing to the kirk of dyce and then gathe
Ring of a numer of deid folkis banes, and seything thame in watter and tacking of
That watter and therefter wasching willea[m] sy[m]mer in the haltoun of fyntrie (he
Than being lyand deidlie seik) and therefter causing the said willia[m]is gude
Mother tak the saids banes and cast thame in the watter of doyn, q[ui]lk
Quhen sche had done, the watter ru[m]lit in sic a sort as all the hillis had fallin therin and
this sich you can not deny

Fourthly you are indicted for passing to the Church of Dyce and there gathering a number of dead folk's bones and boiling them in water, and taking that water and thereafter washing William Symmer in the Hatton of Fintray (he then being lying deadly sick) and thereafter causing the said William's good mother take the said bones and cast them in the River Don, which when she had done, the water rumbled in such a manner as [if] all the hills had fallen therein and this you can not deny

17th Century

During the 1630s and 1640s a further wave of prosecutions for witchcraft were dealt with in Aberdeen. The city's wardhouse, completed in 1629 within the walls of the existing Tolbooth, housed several witches awaiting trial.

On 9th August 1630, a commission was made to the Sheriff to hold a court to try Marion Hardie, a vagabond and native of Elgin who had been apprehended in Aberdeen as a suspected witch. She was examined before the Bishop of Aberdeen as well as the Provost and Baillies and confessed to several points of witchcraft. She was then strangled and burnt. The following September, a commission was made to search for, and try, Margaret Lumsden, Mallie Cowper and Marion Rodgie, who had all been implicated in Marion Hardie's confession. She had confessed that she 'and the persons named came from Fraserburgh In May last and convened With the devil at the water mouth of Dee beside the block house, plotted the death of Richard Cadenheid's boat in Fittdee, cast a number of stones in the water mouth when the boat was coming in, and by their devilish enchantments the said Richard and all his company died, one man excepted. And this she confessed that she, accompanied [by several other named women], being all convened together in one company at the devil's command by Matthew Wills' wife's instigation, destroyed one boat belonging to Peterhead wherin there perished or died 12 or 13 persons'. All the individuals named

were to be apprehended and imprisoned and all were to be examined and the results reported in writing to the council for further instructions.

One woman, Margaret Fraser, suspected of witchcraft in 1636 managed to break ward and flee from the Tolbooth. As late as 1650, enquiries were being made in Turriff as to whether 'Margaret Fraser, witch, fugitive from the Province of Aberdeen, has been resett in this parish'. It was reported that she had died.

Not all witches who were accused or brought to trial were found guilty and some were actually acquitted. Trial by water - 'swimming the witch' - to see if her guilt could be proven by her ability to float, or her innocence assured if she sank below the surface, was one of the more unusual means by which someone might be acquitted of charges. Some sources tell of accusations but no outcomes. The most common punishments were obviously strangulation followed by burning and, for the less serious offences, banishment. In one case Isobel Burnett was exempt from the charge of witchcraft by the direction of the King.

The Treasurer's accounts for the execution of 'Skuddie' are as follows:
"Item, for teuntie sex leadis of peattis to burne thame, 2lib. 13s. 4d.
Item, for sex lead of fir 1 lib. 10s.
Item, four tar barrellis, 6s. 8d.
Item, for tua irne barrellis, 6s. 8d.
Item, for a staik, careing and upsetting thairof, 13s. 4d.
Item, for sex fadome of towis, 6d.
Item ,for careing the barrellis, fir and coillis, to the staik, 6s. 8d.
Item, to Jon Justice for his fie, 13s. 4d.
Item, the xxi. Of March, 1596, gevin to Gilbert Bairnis, be vertew of one ordinance of counsall, for satisfaction of the expensis maid be him in sustenatioun of the witches preceding that dait, induring thair remaining in prisoun, 20 lib."

In one busy day at the Justice Court held in the Tolbooth on the 25th April 1597 -


Witches4

Bessie Paull was charged with witchcraft
Thomas Ego was charged with using witchcraft and sorcery, declared a fugitive from justice and had all his belongings confiscated.
Elspett Strathauchyn, of Warthill, and Beak Taiss at the Burnside of Logie, were declared fugitives from the law 'attachit to this day as witches' and had their belongings confiscated.
The Assize absolved Isobel Forbes of Glenmullocht of the charge of bewitching Gilbert Malcolm, and of two charges against her.
The Assize absolved Margaret Clerauche of the whole dittay against her.
John Ross became cautioner for Elspeth Findlay, at the cost of 200 merks and for Agnes Frame at a cost of 90 merks.
Katherine Ferries was convicted as a rank witch on 8 points of witchcraft contained in her dittay.

In Aberdeen there were quite considerable numbers of accusations, trials and burnings. The total numbers for the years 1536 to 1703 - during which period witchcraft was deemed a criminal offence in Scotland - for Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire are as follows:

Year	Number of cases	Year	Number of Cases
1536	1	1631	1
1580	1	1636	2
1590	6	1637	1
1596	7	1643	1
1597	31	1644	1
1601	1	1649	2
1607	1	1650	2
1613	1	1662	2
1626	2	1669	1
1627	3	1670	1
1629	1	1676	1
1630	5	1703	1

Aberdeen suffered from a 'witchcraze' just like all of Europe, in the years of 1596 and 1597 when there were in excess of 40 cases in total, and, to a lesser degree in the 1630s and 1640. After 1703, witchcraft was no longer considered to be a criminal offence and no further cases are recorded from Aberdeen after this date.



Witches5

Glossary

assise	trial by jury
barrellis	barrels
dittay	list of charges against a witch
fadome	fathom
fie	fee
fir	fire wood
fyllis	find guilty
ime	iron
leadis/lead	a measure of quantity varying according to district and commodity
lib	a pound in monetary terms
merk	a monetary unit; 2/3 of a pound of Scots
peatis	peat
staik	stake
tar	tar
towis	a rope, cord or length of strong twine, string

Download an electronic version of the Witches Booklet.

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Sandra West: The Woman Who Was Buried in Her Ferrari

cultofweird.com

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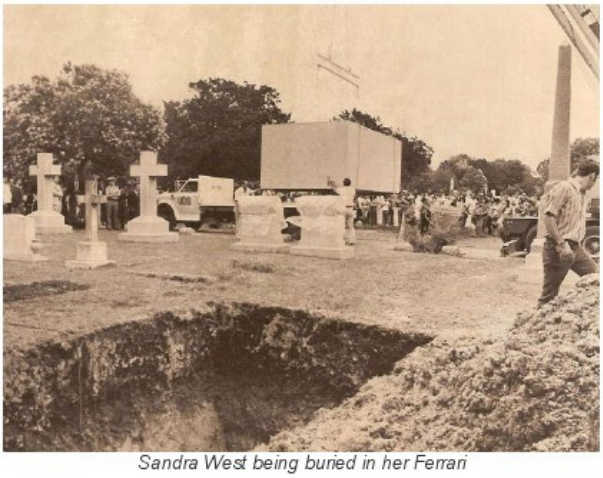
Museum of Oddities and Obscurities - www.cultofweird.com

Cult of Weird

By Charlie Hintz on May 23, 2016

As stipulated in her will, millionaire heiress Sandra West was buried in lingerie in the driver's seat of her powder blue 1964 Ferrari.

Thanks to Messy Nessy Chic for digging this out of the dark corners of the internet today:



Sandra West being buried in her Ferrari

Sandra West, heiress to her dead husband Ike West's Texas oil fortune, died from an overdose of prescription drugs on March 10, 1977 in her Beverly Hills home. West, who was described by her physician as "a psychotic with a tendency toward paranoia and hallucination," had requested in her will that she be dressed in her lace nightgown and buried in one of her three Ferraris "with the seat slanted comfortably."

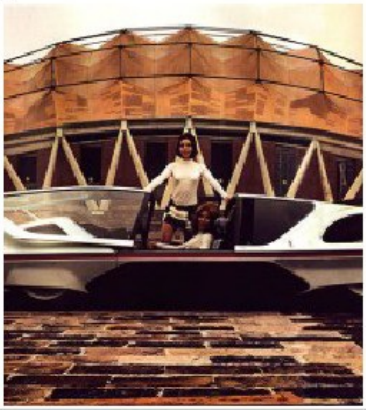
Because you wouldn't want your corpse to spend eternity in an awkward, upright position.

West's body and her beloved Ferrari were sent back to Texas, where a huge grave was dug beside her husband in San Antonio's Alamo Masonic Cemetery. The car was placed inside a large wooden crate, lowered into the ground by a crane, and then covered in concrete.



Sandra West and her Ferrari

Article here: Socialite Sandra West was buried in her Ferrari in San Antonio



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Woman drove for days in Alaska with husband's body in casket

July 23, 2016 yahoo.com

KETCHIKAN, Alaska (AP) — A woman who drove her husband's body on a days-long traveling wake in Alaska and used ice from canneries to keep him cold is not accused of breaking any laws.

Officers responded to a call last week to find the body of a 78-year-old man inside an aluminum transport casket.

Ketchikan Police Chief Alan Bengaard told the Ketchikan Daily News (http://bit.ly/2a4IF5q) that the woman stopped at canneries for ice to put in the truck bed during the "rolling wake."

The man had died of natural causes.

A mortuary took custody of the body after the authorities were called.

The family can make further arrangements.

Bengaard said hopefully the woman won't take her husband back out on the road, but that he wasn't aware of any laws she had broken.

—

Information from: Ketchikan (Alaska) Daily News, http://www.ketchikandailynews.com

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In 1915, This Woman Served as Mayor of Los Angeles (For 36 Hours)

July 12, 2016

On Sept. 10, 1915, a delegation of Mexican officials refused to see the mayor of Los Angeles, reported the Los Angeles Herald, “upon learning that a women was holding the position temporarily.” Earlier in the day, Councilmember Estelle Lawton Lindsey had made history by becoming the first woman to serve as Los Angeles mayor – and the first to hold the office in a major American city, even if on a temporary basis – when both Mayor Charles E. Sebastian and City Council President Martin F. Betkouski left to attend the 1915 Panama Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco.



Estelle Lawton Lindsey

A portrait of Estelle Lawton Lindsey from the July 6, 1915, edition of the Los Angeles Record.

Lindsey had achieved another municipal milestone three months earlier when she won her seat on the City Council. In doing so, she became the first woman elected to a governing body of a major U.S. city. It would be another 38 years before Rosalind Wyman became the second woman elected to the Los Angeles City Council.

In 1915, Lindsey became the first woman elected to the governing council of a major U.S. city.

During Lindsey's first days on the council, the Los Angeles Record profiled its former reporter, who remarked “the first thing I want to do is to establish the fact that a woman is capable of sitting in the councils of city, county, and state.” Throughout her two-year tenure, she championed public health issues, fought for greater city services for women, and increased the number of female deputies assigned to crimes involving women and children.

Lindsey credited her political success to the popularity of one woman: Cynthia Grey. “I have no organizations to thank for being elected. If I’ve anybody at all to thank it’s Cynthia Grey,” she commented in Sunset magazine. Cynthia Grey was the pseudonym of Lindsey’s front-page column in the Los Angeles Record. The column was Ann Landers, Miss Manners, Julia Child, and Bill Nye the Science Guy rolled into one. Lindsey spent five years addressing a wide-range of Angelenos’ inquiries: managing a troubled marriage; cooking Chinese Chop Suey; telling the phases of the moon; removing nits from hair. In response to the last of these, she wrote: “For the eleventh hundred and eleventy-leven [sic] thousandth time, COAL OIL.”

She began writing for the Record shortly before arriving in Los Angeles with her husband in 1908. Prior to life as a journalist, Lindsey worked as a German teacher and then, in Kentucky, worked for the forerunner to the Internal Revenue Service. She was born in 1868 to a wealthy family in South Carolina but ultimately rejected the trappings of her family’s society lifestyle. A WPA interview with Lindsey explained that she preferred writing to “the genteel past time of china painting or portrait painting." The 1916 Sunset profile suggested that her Lawton ancestors were turning over in their graves “when here in California, [she] went into newspaper work and [joined] the Socialist party."

As a member of Los Angeles' Socialist Party, Lindsey ran unsuccessfully for the California State Assembly in 1912 and 1914. She credited a party organizer (who liked her opinions expressed as Cynthia Grey) for convincing her to run for city office. But in Nov. 1914, the local Socialist Party attempted to oust her when she failed to vote along party lines. At the Socialist convention three months later, Lindsey's loyalty was again questioned when she accepted campaign endorsements from particular women's clubs. Covering this issue in the convention, the Times reported "it is a well known Socialist doctrine that a true Socialist must accept support from no one but Socialists." Forced off the Socialist ticket, Lindsey still managed to win as an Independent with the support from the rank-and-file Socialists along with the women's clubs (despite her earlier assertions that no organized group deserved credit for her political victory).

Lindsey worked not just to make a career for herself, she told the Herald. "I shall work for the city and strive to leave Los Angeles eager for more women in government."

When Lindsey failed to win re-election in 1917, she returned to journalism and remained active in public life through her advocacy for women's issues and her involvement in women's clubs. She and her husband continued to live in their Echo Park bungalow for more than 40 years before she passed away Nov. 27, 1955.

Though Estelle Lawton Lindsey held the title for only 36 hours, her tenure as acting Los Angeles mayor made national headlines. The Washington Post claimed, "Los Angeles has qualified as the first city of the first class in the United States to boast a woman mayor." The Los Angeles Times reported that Lindsey was "greeted with a salute of 17 flashlight guns as she entered the Mayor's office" which was followed by "rapid-fire movie cameras" later in the day. In both her temporary role as mayor and as a city councilwoman, Lindsey worked not just to make a career for herself, "but to make a record for woman suffrage," she told the Los Angeles Herald. "I shall work for the city and strive to leave Los Angeles eager for more women in government."


ONE CENT CITY & COUNTY

LOS ANGELES EVENING HERALD

NIGHT EDITION

ENVOYS IN U.S. DISCUSS BIG LOAN FOR ALLIES

CHILD OF THREE IS KILLED IN FALL OVER TABLE

L. A. HAS WOMAN FOR MAYOR FIRST TIME IN HISTORY OF CITY

Mother Love Bares Girl's Heart

STAGE LURE IN SUIT FOR DIVORCE

GIRL CLAIMS FATHER TOOK HER CHILD

BREAKS NECK IN RUSH TO ANSWER PARENT

CHARGE AGAINST TEACHER IS PROBED

Acting Mayor Lindsey on the front page of the Los Angeles Herald

Acting Mayor Lindsey appeared the front page of the Sept. 10, 1915, Los Angeles Herald. Courtesy of the California Digital Newspaper Collection at UC Riverside.

Zoe Hartman, "A City Mother," *Independent ... Devoted to the Consideration of Politics, Social and Economic Tendencies, History, Literature, and the Arts*, November 27, 1916, 356.

Sherry J. Katz, "Redefining 'The Political': Socialist Women and Party Politics in California, 1900-1920," in *We Have Come to Stay: American Women and Political Parties, 1880-1960*, ed. Melanie S. Gustafson et al. (New Mexico: University of New Mexico Press, 1999), 23

Estelle Lawton Lindsey, "Running to Win: The Story of My Campaign and Election to the City Council of Los Angeles," *Ladies Homes Journal*, November 1916, 14, accessed July 12, 2016, https://books.google.com/books?id=VHdAAQAAMAAJ&pg=RA10-PA18#v=onepage&q&f=false

Gertrude M. Price, "To Guard Rights of Sex, and Aid Babies, Platform of Councilwoman Lindsey," *Los Angeles Record*, July 6, 1915.

Bertha H. Smith, "Interesting Westerners," *Sunset*, January 1916, accessed July 12, 2016, https://books.google.com/books?id=gEREAQAAMAAJ&pg=PA28#v=onepage&q&f=false

LA as SUBJECT
LA as Subject

A collaboration between the USC Libraries and KCETLink, Lost LA features the member collections of L.A. as Subject, a research alliance dedicated to preserving and telling the sometimes-hidden stories and histories of the Los Angeles region.

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The woman who cut off her breasts to protest a tax - BBC News

bbc.com

http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-36891356



Image copyrightMurali T

An artist is behind a project to revive the story of Nangeli

The story of a lower caste woman who cut her breasts to protest against a discriminatory "breast tax" in British ruled India is being revived by an artist wants to recognise her sacrifice. BBC Hindi's Divya Arya reports from the south Indian state of Kerala.

The story of Nangeli may never have been known, but for a chance discovery.

Four years ago, artist Murali T was flipping through an in-house magazine of a local bank, when he stumbled on a small report about Nangeli, written by a native from her area, Cherthala.

Intrigued by the story, he made his way to the small sleepy town.

"I spent a lot of time with the local people of Cherthala and even found the locality where Nangeli is believed to have lived over 100 years ago.

"It was called Mulachhipuram or the land of the woman with breasts, named to remember Nangeli's great sacrifice against the breast-tax," he told the BBC.

It is a village tale that is not officially recognised in any of India's historical accounts.

But the story of Nangeli is much loved by her local villagers - and now Murali T hopes to document it and have it recognised as part of Kerala's history by the government.

Reinforcing caste structure

The "breast-tax" had been imposed by the king of the erstwhile State of Travancore, one of the 550 princely States that existed in British ruled India.

Women from lower castes were not allowed to cover their breasts, and were taxed heavily if they did so.

"The purpose of the breast-tax was to maintain the caste structure," said Dr Sheeba KM, an associate Professor of gender ecology and Dalit studies at the Shri Shankaracharya Sanskrit Vishwavidyalaya in Kerala.

Social customs on clothing were tailored to a person's caste status, which meant that they could be identified merely by the way they dressed.

Nangeli belonged to the Ezhava caste. Her community was required to pay the tax along with other lower castes like the Thia, Nadar and Dalit communities.

But, villagers say, she decided to protest by covering her chest without paying the breast-tax - a brave move in the early 1900s for a woman of lower caste status.

Our auto rickshaw driver Mohanan Narayan takes us to the neighbourhood where Nangeli lived.

"When the tax inspector heard she was refusing to pay the tax, he went to her house to ask her to stop breaking the law. But she still refused to pay the tax, and cut her breasts off in protest instead," he says.

According to local villagers, Nangeli died of excessive blood loss, while her distraught husband committed suicide by jumping into her funeral pyre. The couple had no children.

Her relatives moved out of Mulachhipuram to nearby towns and hamlets.

Recognising sacrifice

Maniyan Velu, her cousin's great-grand-son, says he feels upset that Nangeli's story is not more widely known.

"Her act was selfless, a sacrifice to benefit all the women of Travancore, and ultimately forced the King to roll back the breast-tax," he says.

An old man, Maniyan owns no land, and his children work as farm labourers. But he is not looking for charity, only some recognition.

"We feel so proud that we are her family. All we want is that more people should know about her sacrifice. It would be befitting if her name was made a part of this region's history," he tells the BBC.

Murali T hopes to make that happen.

He was so moved by Nangeli's story and the absence of any visual documentation that he decided to paint a likeness of the violent act she brought upon herself.

"I did not want to depict it as a bloody event; instead my aim was to glorify her act as an inspiration to humanity, a representation that would command respect," he said.

His three paintings of Nangeli have now been published in his book, Amana - The Hidden Pictures of History, this year.

He has also held 15 exhibitions of his paintings across Kerala and now plans to hold one in a public place in Cherthala.

"If I can get the people of that area to take notice, that may help convince the government to include this important act as part of our official history."

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Image copyright Murali T

Teresa Fidalgo, the Portuguese "White Lady" blogspot.com

http://strangeworldofmystery.blogspot.com/2009/07/white-lady-is-type-of-female-ghost.html

World of Mystery

Mystery is everywhere around us...it is everything what we cannot explain... But why we must stay in the dark? Start with me the journey in the world of mystery...let her to guide us...who knows what we can find out...

Sunday, July 5, 2009

A White Lady is a type of female ghost purported to appear in many rural areas, and who is supposed to have died or suffered trauma in life. White Lady legends are found around the world. Common to many of them is the theme of losing or being betrayed by a husband or fiancé. They are often associated with an individual family line, as a harbinger of death. When one of these ghosts is seen it indicates that someone in the family is going to die, similar to a banshee.

Generally, the aspects of this phenomena are that the ghost is female, dressed in late era Victorian garb, seen along a rural road, and associated with some local legend of tragedy.

This is a re-enactment of a bizarre car accident caused by a spirit in Sintra Portugal.



At approximately 4mins 20seconds, the group of teenagers stopped to pick up a stranger on the road, that's when the strange chain of events started acting up.

During that short ride after Teresa boarded the car, she actually told them she was killed in an accident 2 years ago but they didn't believe her. Thereafter she pointed to the exact spot where she claimed she was killed before reverting to her true form.

She suddenly turns to the camera and screams, showing her face, which is now apparently badly scarred and bloody and vanishes immediately. The car, according to reports, flipped on its side, killing two of the travelers.

The video David made is dated 2003. Three years later there's another car accident on that stretch of road on April 2006.

Tiago end Tânia died in this accident. David survived but he never could explain what really happened in that night...

Some bizarre facts:

- 2 years before the real victims of this accident met this spirit, there were actual police records, which depict another fatal accident, involved this girl by the name of Teresa Fidalgo back in 1983



- Although this video was only a re-enactment of the actual accident, for some unexplained reason, the frames somehow 'jumped' and went out of focus whenever the camera was focused on the girl who played Teresa's role in that actual accident. Also notice that when the girl who played Teresa pointed to the road ahead, that particular streetlamp directly above was put out

- In the actual accident, police authorities found a DV camera recording, which is 13-14 minutes long, which shows what had actually taken place before the accident

- In the actual investigations, the police later released that the car crash had never hit anything it just flipped over without any actual explanation and coincidentally that very same streetlamp, which was taken out during this re-enactment

Posted by crkota at 4:10 PM
Labels: Folklore and Legends, Ghosts encounters, Haunted Places

45 comments:

josekoool_12xd said...
jos

fea conchetumare se lo manda franco araya soy del 5a del liceo eugenio maria de hostos de la reina

September 27, 2009 at 4:11 AM
xxmzsmilesxx said...
xxr

Hi I was wondering is this true: hi... i'm Teresa Fidalgo. Today i turn 26 years of being dead. if you don't send this to 20 people i will sleep by your side tonight FOREVER. if you don't believe me google my name.... you'll see
This is scaring all my friends. And I got to admit its scaring me right now.

May 31, 2010 at 1:43 PM
IdOnTkNoW said...
IdC

I dont know if its true but i sent it to 20 of my freinds anyway
I am not taking any chances

June 10, 2010 at 12:04 AM
tado said...
tad

man u guys are stupid... I get the same massege everey day "...Today i turn 26 years of being dead..." lol did she die every day...

June 22, 2010 at 8:10 PM
yummymummy2010 said...
yur

this is to stupid it is clear that it is not real shes ment to be sleepin next to all the ppl that didnt pass it on wot a load of crap if u beleive it ur silly.

September 30, 2010 at 5:03 PM
goldengirl1 said...
gol

If this was real then she has been sleepin next to me for about 4 years. How stupid can you be?

December 7, 2010 at 10:55 PM
Justin said...
Jus

What a load of crap honestly whos the sicko going around trying to scare people about fake stuff... Get a life

January 19, 2011 at 9:20 PM
tirjfrjfdkfr said...
tirjf

thiss iss sooo not true....if you belive in this your stupid and silly and DUMB.....COME ON GUYS GET A LIFE:/

January 23, 2011 at 10:25 AM
morne said...
mo

Stop being such complete jerks. She's obviously superficial and clearly she had pointed out that she's asking on behalf of her friends. It's a simple question you idiotic neanderthals

February 10, 2011 at 1:47 AM
morne said...
mo

I meant she's obviously superstitious

February 10, 2011 at 1:49 AM
Sherwin Dale said...
Sh
Da i dont know how to send it to 20 people but every 3:00 of night i hear lady hung and one day on january3 i saw a very tall lady just like an old banana

February 14, 2011 at 9:19 AM
Sherwin Dale said...
Sh
Da i didnt send it to 20 people cause i dont know how because of that every night i hear a lady hung but on january3 i saw a tall white lady just like a big mango tree

February 14, 2011 at 9:22 AM
Roar said...
Ro

I wonder how this story is still around. It's a movie ffs: http://www.ovirus.com/

February 17, 2011 at 10:47 AM
xxx said...
xxx This comment has been removed by the author.
March 17, 2011 at 6:43 PM
Fuck you said...
Fuc
you TERESA FIDALGO FUCK YOU BITCH I M NOTT SCARE I HOPE SOO YOU WILL SEEE THIS MESSAGE WHAT I M WRITEING NOW FOR YOU BITCH YOUR MOTHER IT WAS OBESOULY BITCH N YOU TERESA YOU ARE LIKE YOUR MOTHER BITCH TERESA FUCK YOU TERESA FIDALGO FUCK YOU BITCH TERESA I WAS FUCK YOUR MOTHER N YOU WAS BORN LITTLE GIRL I PUTT YOUR NAME TERESA BITCH YOU HAVE TO THANK ME CASE I PUTT YOUR NAME TERESA BITCH TERESA FUCK YOU IN HELL 4EWER !)

March 17, 2011 at 6:57 PM
Fuck you said...
Fuc
you TERESA FIDALGO FUCK YOU BITCH I M NOTT SCARE I HOPE SOO YOU WILL SEEE THIS MESSAGE WHAT I M WRITEING NOW FOR YOU BITCH YOUR MOTHER IT WAS OBESOULY BITCH N YOU TERESA YOU ARE LIKE YOUR MOTHER BITCH TERESA FUCK YOU TERESA FIDALGO FUCK YOU BITCH TERESA I WAS FUCK YOUR MOTHER N YOU WAS BORN LITTLE GIRL I PUTT YOUR NAME TERESA BITCH YOU HAVE TO THANK ME CASE I PUTT YOUR NAME TERESA BITCH TERESA FUCK YOU IN HELL 4EWER !)

TERESA BITCH I M NOTT SCARE FROM YOU MOTHER FUCKER LOOK AT ME TERESA BITCH I M NOTT SCARE FROM YOU TERESA BITCH FUCK YOU BITCH TERESA 4EWER IN HELL !)

March 17, 2011 at 7:01 PM
golden lion motion pictures said...
golden lion motion picture it totally fake. made a perfect plan.
March 23, 2011 at 9:05 PM
Quenlane said...
Qu
that was not true i won't believe that it's a superstitious belief.....

March 25, 2011 at 7:58 AM
Quenlane said...
Qu
i won't believe any superstitious tale....

March 25, 2011 at 7:59 AM
dawn_rosello31 said...
daw
here in Philippines, there was a text message that is speading, here it was:
hello everyone im theresa fidalgo im 25 years dead because of a car accident yo need to send this to 20 person if you not believing me you can search me in google if you dont send this to 20 person ill sleep with you forever until you die!if you didnt want send this to 20 person again

im THERESA FIDALGO

DONT EVER BELIEVE THEM>>
BELIEVE ONLY TO GOD!!!

you know what?? when i receive this message, my faith has been shaken..

BUT GOD"S POWER IS MORE POWERFUL THAN ANYTHINGS ELSE THAT HE ONLY CREATED>>>

DON'T BELIEVE THIS>>
EVIL WARRIORS JUST SCARING AND TESTING US!!

STICK TO GOD!!

April 4, 2011 at 2:19 PM
sweet143 said...
This comment has been removed by the author.
August 16, 2011 at 2:17 AM
sweet143 said...

Oh thou of little faith.!
GOD said"FEAR NOT FOR I AM WITH THEE"
trust HIM , and not THEM!!

August 16, 2011 at 2:19 AM
teddiiee1995 said...

i hope tonight you will sleep by my side .. i'm not believe in this story .. i'm not scared !!

August 21, 2011 at 5:30 PM
red canuto said...
come on, let's get do it. i know that we can do it.

come on everybody . .!!
(clap your hands)

but, i will pass this message to 20 people around the globe~

September 6, 2011 at 8:54 AM
true or not said...
I BELIEVE in a mystery like white ladies, but my faith is always in god..

October 14, 2011 at 10:55 AM
glenn venancio said...
i also receive the same message but i didnt pass it to 20 person..since i want to know if its true..but its nit...it was just a chain message ant the only purpose is to scare people..

November 16, 2011 at 2:56 AM
Leii_15 said...
Lei

A Portuguese video featuring a White Lady is available on the Internet. The video was reportedly found at the scene of a fatal car accident, near Sintra, Portugal. In the video, a woman and two young men are taking a car trip to the mountains. One passenger records the trip with a video camera. While driving along the road, the travelers spot a strange female hitchhiker, whom they pick up. The passenger with the camera focuses on the hitchhiker, who seems strangely quiet, but says her name is Teresa (Teresa Fidalgo), and states that she hasn't been the same since her accident. She then points out a spot on the road where she says she died. She suddenly turns to the camera and screams, showing her face, which is now apparently badly scarred and bloody and vanishes immediately. The car, according to reports, was found flipped on its side, killing two of the travelers. According to the text at the end of the video, police investigating the accident found that a girl named Teresa Fidalgo died in a car accident in 1983 at that very spot. Many viewers claimed the video was a fake and regarded it as an imitation of The Blair Witch Project. The producer, David Rebordão, admits this, explaining the story's fabrication on his website. Rebordão confirmed, in a interview with Julia Pinheiro (channel TVI) that the story was fake, and that he had created the character himself. He stated that he was very surprised at the notoriety the story has achieved all over the world..

Courtesy fr0m wikipedia.org

TERESA FIDALGO IS FAKE !!

December 25, 2011 at 7:59 AM
ashleigh5541 said...
ash

just thought id say this but im 12 years old and im terrified of things like this and i wont be able to sleep so please stop

January 2, 2012 at 1:45 AM
ashleigh5541 said...
ash
just thought id say this but im 12 years old and im terrified of things like this and i wont be able to sleep so please stop

January 2, 2012 at 1:46 AM
SexyMimi1999 said...
Se. This comment has been removed by the author.
January 2, 2012 at 4:12 AM
SexyMimi1999 said...
Se.
this is such a fake i don't believe this not even a little bit i will actually not send this video just to see if she will be there for true pfff this story is such a fake!!

January 2, 2012 at 4:13 AM
..keyleigh.. said...
..ke
i dont normally believe stuff like this but i decided to look into this and yes i did get scared and pass it on, this video wad a reinactment but they didnt make the focus blur on the girl playing the white lady. also you will notice the street light flick off. how would a groupe of people do this? why dont you go on youtube and look up her name? then you will soon see if you have changed your mind...

January 2, 2012 at 2:56 PM
..keyleigh.. said...
..ke
hi guys, ive read some of the comments and lookede into this a bit. i recived this message and yes i did get scared and resend it. but no i still dont think she will sleep next to you. yes she did die in a road accsident and yes i do believe in paranormal activity. the video that is posted on this page is a reinactment but the actors and acctresses did not make the focus on the lady playing the white lady go blury. also if you watch this close enough you will notice a street light go off where the girl had died. think about it how would the people controle this? look on youtube search her name and see what you think... x

January 2, 2012 at 3:04 PM
jcgacote said...
jcg
whoever she is, the only thing we need to do is to PRAY and strengthen our faith to HIM, and do not believe her existence. GOD BLESS THE WORLD against fallen spirits!

January 6, 2012 at 9:53 AM
Georgia Gutierrez said...
Ge
Gu Not true! Was based off a short movie done like Blair Witch Project. Very fake!

March 7, 2015 at 2:00 AM
Nudra Shafini said...


Dear all..pls do some research..teresa fidalgo not fake..may she rest in peace..but story of her ghost is FAKE!!dont be ridicilous..!!

Nudra Shafin

June 1, 2015 at 8:35 AM


Katie Chism said...

Katie Chism I don't believe in stuff like that, but to be honest every night since i first got the message on fb i didn't forward it, but every since then I've been seeing a lady in white, and sometimes black. Everytime i see her in white someone in my family dies, everytime i see her in black someone in my family dies. So there for i think it's real, but that's just me.

February 15, 2016 at 11:20 PM


Katie Chism said...

Katie Chism I meant everytime i see her in black someone in my family gets hurt.

February 15, 2016 at 11:23 PM

Shreya sengupta said...

Shreya sengupta It's all jst rubbish...ghosts do not exist in reality

May 23, 2016 at 5:55 PM

Shreya sengupta said...

Shreya sengupta It's all jst rubbish...ghosts do not exist in reality

May 23, 2016 at 5:56 PM


Samyra Johnson said...

Samyra Johnson U didn't have to curse that much and Teresa is probably dead but the story and her behind a ghost is no true

June 14, 2016 at 4:35 PM

Samyra Johnson said...

How can teresa sleep next to every one she can't I'm not going to be rude or anything because suh she be dead but she probably have thousands of rumors these stuff can be really fake and most of this is not fake so that's just on my mind and of your asking yes I think it is fake and I'm not cursing people out while typing and don't call Teresa out of her name

June 14, 2016 at 4:39 PM

Curios said...

Curios I don't know if it's true but I sent it anyways

I hope that helped you

June 14, 2016 at 11:37 PM

Curi said...

Curi I don't know if it's true but I sent it anyways

I hope that helped you

June 14, 2016 at 11:37 PM
Unknown said...
Un

This crap is for superstitious people. If Teresa will sleep next to me, freaking let her!! Why evolve a tragic accident into some stupid ghost story!! Let the poor girl rest in peace! This was created by people who love making people terrified of some stupid, ancient folklore! I'm Portugese, and this stuff would make my whole family have a stroke from laughing too hard. Teresa "wants to sleep with me??" Go ahead!! Then I can tell everyone how this is just some dumb campfire story.
Sheesh!

July 17, 2016 at 7:03 AM

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World to end July 29, says group that's always wrong

USA Today Network Chuck Campbell, Knoxville (Tenn.) News Sentinel

usatoday.com

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Pencil in the apocalypse for July 29, 2016, just in case.

The group End Times Prophecies has declared the world will end July 29 in a chain of events prompted because of an ongoing phenomenon known as a polar flip.

The good news: We can stop worrying about who will be the next president.



071816apocalypse1.jpg

A 17-minute Armageddon News video, posted July 9 on YouTube and viewed more than 800,000 times, explains the end-of-the world theory as a modulated female voice reads through a variety of biblical quotes, illustrated with cheap special effects that couldn't buy Michael Bay a cup of coffee.

"The polar flip will make the stars race across the sky, and the vacuum from the reeling of the Earth will pull the atmosphere along the ground, trying to catch up, creating what is known as a roll cloud," the Armageddon News report said.

Well, at least the polar flip is real.

The polar reversal is a routine global phenomenon that happens gradually as a result of shifting liquid iron in the Earth's core, according to NASA. It's a slow process, though NASA does indicate some of the most intense drifting will be June 14 to Aug. 19 this year.

End Times Prophecies uses that scientific truth as the catalyst for the apocalyptic chain of events.

Meanwhile, it should be noted that the group also had predicted a giant collision between Earth and an asteroid in May and that Barack Obama would reveal himself to be the Antichrist in June. So it's not surprising that the latest "news" is being met with skepticism.

As YouTube user Typical White Teenager says in a comment under the video, "I just caught a Dragonite and if I'm going my Dragonite is coming with me."

Pokemon Go followers aren't the only ones who would suffer from a July 29 apocalypse. Football season is about to kick into gear, the leaves will be changing soon, and the holidays will be right behind.

Plus July 29 is a Friday. Seriously, a Friday.

Follow Chuck Campbell on Twitter: @KnoxvilleDotcom

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Exclusive: Zak Bagans Gives Haunted Museum and Ghost Adventures Update - Dread Central

dreadcentral.com

Dread Central

Posted on June 10, 2016by Steve Barton

Recently we caught up with Zak Bagans while he and his "Ghost Adventures" crew were in the middle of shooting the new season and got the scoop on when you'll be able to visit his haunted museum in Vegas and what you can expect next from Travel Channel's paranormal juggernaut show.

The question on the minds of lots of fans is simple… When will they be able to visit Bagans' museum of haunted objects that was featured in the show "Deadly Possessions"?

"*The building [that houses the museum] is from 1938, and we have confirmed that people have died inside of it over the years,*" Bagans tells us. "*We brought in a pair of construction workers from Los Angeles who specialize in set design. After being there just a short while, they both, literally, ran out of my building and quit after having experiences inside. As a result construction has slowed a bit, thus resulting in a delay in opening the museum to the public. Rest assured I'm as anxious to get this place open as anybody, and as soon as I have a concrete opening date, you'll be the first to know about it.*"

Interestingly enough, "*The construction guys quitting actually caused us to investigate the place for an episode of 'Ghost Adventures.' The museum… it will touch you. You hear voices. You feel cold energies pass through you. There's never been anything like it.*"

Speaking of the new season and what to expect from the show that started it all:

"*In the new season we decided to return to Winchester Mystery House. Our first investigation there was the ONLY one in 'Ghost Adventures' history that we had to stop in the middle of because of something very serious that happened to me. We also have an episode coming up in which for the first time Billy [Tolley] completely loses himself during an investigation of a demonic infestation, which results in some of the most chilling evidence to date. That place is described as the 'House of Evil.'*"

Four remaining brand-new episodes from last season will premiere beginning on July 16th.

For more info visit **"Ghost Adventures" on Travel Channel**, and "like" **"Ghost Adventures" on Facebook**. In addition be sure to follow **@GhostAdventures**, **@Zak_Bagans**, **@JayWasley**, **@AaronGoodwin**, and **@BillyTolley** on Twitter using the hashtag #GhostAdventures.

Steve Barton

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